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Contents

Two poems by Thom Gunn 403
Hugh Kenner: sizing up Thomas Wolfe 403
Garry Wills on 'The Shaping of America' 405-6
Fiction: John Gardner, Nadine Gordimer 410-11
Nihonjinron - the myth of Japanese uniqueness 407
Byzantium: mission to the Slavs; Cyril Mango on icons 417, 415

AMERICAN HISTORY 405-6, BIBLIOGRAPHY 424, BIOGRAPHY 403-4, CHILDREN'S BOOKS 421, CINEMA AND LETTERS 408, FICTION 410-11, HISTORY 416, JAPAN 407, LANGUAGE 417, LITERATURE 419, MUSIC 409, PHILOSOPHY 420, POETRY 418

HUGH KENNER
THOM GUNN
JOHN MELMOTH
NICHOLAS LEMANN
GARY WILLS
ANTHONY PAGDEN
RAYMOND CARR
BRIAN MOERAN
JEREMY HARDIE
PATRICK MCCARTHY
ALAN STANBROOK
MICHAEL TANNER
CURTIS A. PRICE
JOHN ROSSELLI
ALICE H. G. PHILLIPS
JOHN CLUTE
HOLLY ELEY
PATRICIA CRAIG
CHRISTOPHER HOPE
T. J. BINYON
H. R. WOODHUYSEN
J. K. L. WALKER
VICTORIA GLENDINNING
DOMINIQUE GOY-BLANQUET
JOHN BUTT
CYRIL MANGO
JULIAN BUDDEN
JONATHAN SUMPTION
ALASTAIR HAMILTON
NICOLAS BARKER
DIMITRI BOLENSKY
STEPHEN MEDCALF
C. H. SISSON
JASPER GRIFFIN
DAVID TROTTER
RICHARD TUCK
OLIVER REYNOLDS
NEIL PHILIP
ANNE DUCHENE
JOHN CLUTE
PAT RAINNE
SEBASTIAN CARTER

Commentary
Peter Nichols: *A Piece of My Mind* (Apollo Theatre) 414
Elizabeth Bowen: *The Heat of the Day* (Donmar Warehouse) 414
Shakespeare: *Julius Caesar* (Royal Shakespeare Theatre) 414
Tiro de Molina: *Heaven Bent, Hell Bound* (Bridge Lane Theatre) 414
From Byzantium to El Greco: *Greek Frescoes and Icons* (Royal Academy) 415
Giuseppe Verdi: *Simon Boccanegra* (Coliseum) 415

Robert Bartlett: *Trial by Fire and Water - The medieval judicial ordeal* 416
Stephen Haliczer (Editor): *Inquisition and Society in Early Modern Europe* 416
Thomas More: *Complete Works - Volume Eleven, The Answer to a Poisoned Book* 416
Roman Jakobson: *Selected Writings - Volume Six, Early Slavic Paths and Crossroads: Part One, Comparative Slavic Studies - The Cyrillo-Methodian tradition; Part Two, Medieval Slavic Studies* 417
D. Z. Phillips: *R. S. Thomas, Poet of the Hidden God* 418
R. S. Thomas: *Welsh Airs* 418
Michael S. Silk: *Homer - The Illud* 418
Robin Kirkpatrick: *Dante - The Divine Comedy* 418
Peter France: *Rousseau - Confessions* 418
Nicholas Boyle: *Goethe - Faust, Part One* 418
Graham Storey: *Dickens - Bleak House* 418
Eric Warner: *Woolf - The Waves* 419
Peter Queennell and Tore Zetterholm: *An Illustrated Companion to World Literature* 419
Terence Wright: *"Tass of the D'Urbervilles"* 419
Alcuin Blamires: *"The Canterbury Tales"* 419
Geoffrey Harvey: *"Sons and Lovers"* 419
Gregory S. Kavka: *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory* 419
Tom Sorell: *Hobbes* 419
David Johnston: *The Rhetoric of Leviathan - Thomas Hobbes and the politics of cultural transformation* 420
This is His Coat (poem) 420
William Mayne: *Glenn Ahoj!* 421
Elsie McCutcheon: *Storm Bird* 421
Anthony Horowitz: *The Silver Citadel* 421
Catherine Sefton: *Shadows on the Lake* 421
B. H. Newdigate: *Book Production Notes - Articles contributed to "The London Mercury" 1920-1925* 421
Tom Colverson and Dennis Hall: *A Catalogue of Fine Press Printers in the British Isles* 424

Among this week's contributors: 422
Author, Author 422
Index of books reviewed 423
TLS Listings 422-23

Cover picture
SS Sergius, Bacchus and Justitia by Michael Damaskinos, painted after the battle of Lepanto (1571), now in the Museum of the Antikythera, Kerkira. It is reproduced from the catalogue to the exhibition reviewed on page 415 (From Byzantium to El Greco: Greek frescoes and icons, 206pp, £9.95).

Editing an orgy

Hugh Kenner

DAVID HERBERT DONALD
Look Homeward: A life of Thomas Wolfe
579pp, Bloomsbury, £16.95,
0316 189529

"Thomas Wolfe", his new biographer concedes, "wrote more bad prose than any other major writer I can think of", and we may as well confront some while we're fresh:

Who are you who keep silence in these watches of deep night? Is it a lion in the mouth sultrious, a fox in the eye humorous, a cat in the paw felonious, that growls and breathes and stirs round night's great wall forever, and that will not let us sleep?

This quotation is from *Hound of Darkness*, 1935, which Wolfe intended as an account of "all the diversity of life in America on a single night". But the book was abandoned. To sample what once seemed worth publishing we may open, say, *The Web and the Rock* at random:

It seemed to him that he had betrayed the only faithful, strong, and certain thing that he had ever known. And in betraying it, it seemed to him that he had not only dishonoured life, spat in the face of love, and sold out the person who had loved him to the fateful regions of rat's alley where the dead men lived, but that he had also betrayed himself and bargained with the dead for his own ruin and defeat.

To call that bad prose is mainly to register dismay at its presence in a twentieth-century novel. Something like it in a play by Eugene O'Neill would pass without remark, and Lincoln on one of his visits to the theatre could have heard its kin and thought it pretty fine. Never meant to be read, such stuff is shaped for uttering, by an actor pressing the back of his fist to his brow. Thomas Wolfe, who had directed his earliest ambitions towards the theatre, seems not to have pondered a disjunction between two genres when he chose, in about 1926, to seek "a more full, expansive, and abundant expression of the great theatre of life than the stage itself could physically compass". Always shrugging free of limits, he would seldom abandon baggage.

But we don't explain away the false ring when we invoke a more declaratory genre. No, that bit of *The Web and the Rock* is declamation compromised: it is declamation striving to be literary, indeed betraying literary sources whence Wolfe's privy paw tends to fetch nuth that is striking. We are in a section of Wolfe's novel called "Love's Bitter Mystery" - a lift from *Ulysses* - which commences with "A Vision of Death in April", a less direct lift from *The Waste Land*, and Eliot's poem has also furnished our excerpt's most mordant detail, "the fateful regions of rat's alley where the dead men lived".

Where the dead men lived? Had Wolfe pondered an oxymoron? More likely he was hurrying to close off the cadence lest his hypnotized pen give the plagiarist away by transcribing "Where the dead men lost their bones". For, scorn though he might "the wastelanders ...

and all other cheap literary fakes", reject though he would a Joyce's "sterile perfection", still he was unable to do without their made-in-Europe rhetoric of opulent despair. It was De Quincey who supplied his larger gestures, but Wolfe never shunned Joyce or Eliot when he needed a phrase.

A few decades ago his rhetoric could overwhelm, and not only in North America. Though in 1930 on the British publication of *Look Homeward*, *Angel the Spectator* was snifty - "so long (and lofty) winded, and so painfully literary" - *The Times* could hail "such torrential energy as has not been seen in English literature for a long time", and the *TLS* expressed awe for a "great talent, so hard, so sensual, so unsentimental... so proudly rising to the heights". Here was a future to watch with some concern: "If Mr Wolfe can be wasted, there is no hope for today." His power translation, even, could not muffle. By 1936 the *Magdeburgische Zeitung* was ranking him above Whitman, Dostoevsky, Goethe, Dickens and Homer.

"Torrential energy", "proudly rising to the heights": such phrasing celebrates not prose but personality. In *Fiction and the Reading Public* (also 1930), Q. D. Leavis had acute things to say about talent that could take a public by storm (such talents as Marie Corelli's and Hall Caine's); she wrote just too soon to adduce Thomas Wolfe). "Even the most critical reader", she remarked, cannot miss the way shortcomings, however egregious, are "carried along by the magnificent vitality of the author, as they are in *Jane Eyre*".

That points toward the biographer's turf, not the critic's; given adequate sources - more than survive for Corelli - biography may hope to shed on a Wolfe such light as criticism sheds on a Forster or a Joyce. And "adequate" proves to be a feeble word for the resources David Herbert Donald has sifted through. "Even at an early age [Wolfe] refused to throw away anything: letters he received, drafts or copies of letters he sent, cancelled checks, bills, form letters, Christmas cards, and all the variant versions of his novels and stories." His depressions are documented, his tantrums, his elations; even the morning he strode back to his Berlin hotel, "pausing amorously to embrace the trees along the sidewalk".

Mr Donald, Warren Professor of American Literature at Harvard, would seem to be Wolfe's ideal biographer. He writes cleanly; he can select. Moreover he can testify to the spell. Now in his late sixties, he speaks candidly for his own American generation:

As an adolescent... I was certain that Thomas Wolfe had told my life story as well as that of his hero, Eugene Oat. Like so many teenagers, I was convinced - without any just cause - that I too was misunderstood by my family and unappreciated in my community, and, like Eugene, I enjoyed writhing in romantic agony.

Later, "My friends and I were certain that we were unrecognized 'artists', like Eugene Gant, and we believed that we also had Faustian appetites."

Still later, he adds, he perhaps grew up, or

perhaps simply shared the 1950s rejection of rhetorical gigantism. But in the 1970s, rereading Wolfe almost by accident, he felt the old flame rekindling, and grew convinced that, uneven though the writing was,

Wolfe was a well-educated man, with a thorough grounding in the classics and in English literature from the University of North Carolina, and with advanced training in English history, the history of drama, and the work of the Romantic poets from Harvard University.

- indeed that he had "the best formal education of any American novelist of his day".

That is one large claim; his next claim is for Wolfe as "a self-conscious writer, who drew up detailed outlines of his books in advance, paid close attention to their structure, and gave much thought to the themes and symbols he intended to develop". A third claim gets put less firmly. Since "none of [Wolfe's books] was printed in anything like the form in which it was originally written", "one could write of [him] as a struggling genius whose work was turned into conventional fiction by an unimaginative editor". That's a new slant on an obligatory theme, the intersection of the legend of Thomas Wolfe with that of his Scribner's editor, Maxwell Perkins. Having hinted this much, Donald backs off a little. No, he'll not come out and call Perkins "unimaginative". Rather he will try "to tell a story without a hero and without a villain", since "Wolfe and Perkins needed each other, and they developed a symbiotic relationship that was in one sense enormously beneficial to both men but in another, hurtful and limiting."

The necessity of Perkins was first stated by Wolfe himself, in "The Story of a Novel" (1936), where he paid tribute to an (unnamed) editor "of immense and patient wisdom and gentle but unyielding fortitude", at whose insistence "chapters 50,000 words long were reduced to ten or fifteen thousand words". We have since heard much more about Perkins sifting doggedly through huge boxes of scribbled rant and managing to shape from them two "novels". Nine years ago, A. Scott Berg's *Max Perkins: Editor of genius* seemed to set the last seal on that story. It has a sequel too: about a year before he died Wolfe parted company with Scribner's. Orgies of scribbling had preceded that event, and would follow it. So a Harper and Brothers editor named Edward C. Aswell found himself having to attempt a Perkins-like service for the mass of post-humous manuscript that became the three final volumes.

In telling that story afresh with greater than customary sympathy for Wolfe, Donald cannot but seem revisionist; cannot but be perceived as dangling a lurid bait, the possibility that Perkins and Aswell, heroes heretofore, had really, in rendering genius saleable, betrayed it. Gore Vidal for one has struck at this bait, and Donald's American publisher quotes his pronouncement:

It is Professor Donald's discovery, or insight, that Thomas Wolfe was to prove what Walt Whitman was to poetry, but thanks to two editors, Perkins and Aswell, he was cut up into conventional "novel-

length" sections - as if *Leaves of Grass* had been reshaped by John Greenleaf Whittier.

Were that true - a Whitman transmogrified into a Whittier - it would be a stunning discovery. It is uncertain, though, how much of it Donald would endorse, in the calm light of a detoxified morning. Normally he is mesmerized by his dishevelled subject; that is indeed one merit of his book, which spares us any subliminal intimation that academic caution would be a creator's best guide. True, he does make those claims for Wolfe's erudition, for his habits of careful planning. Many times we may think we see him setting in place the foundations for a new monument to Wolfe, an artist whose firm vision was too extensive for publishers' cubicles. But as we look closely these tentative foundations crumble, seemingly without Donald's ever quite noticing.

Consider *Welcome to Our City*, the play Wolfe wrote for Professor W. P. Baker's English forty-seven in his final post-graduate year at Harvard. It had thirty-four named characters plus crowds, and on being taxed with the impracticability of that, Wolfe foresaw a someday in which he'd "write a play with fifty, eighty, a hundred people - a whole town, a whole race, a whole epoch". The many subplots were nearly impossible to follow; urged by Baker to cut them, he "explained" them with additions. Moreover, at the premiere in 1923, seven changes of scene kept the audience sitting idle for seven times five minutes. All in all *Welcome to Our City* (earlier, *Nigger Town*) wasn't the hit Wolfe had counted on, amid hopes for the Belmont Prize and translation to Broadway. And his response to a quasi-fiasco was to make its text yet longer.

That was pretty much the model of his literary life; cope with muddle by amplification. It resembles the salesman's stratagem: keep talking. And it's not just a Greenleaf Whittier who will protest that a play nobody can sit still for, a novel no one can contemplate reading through (save Max Perkins, who was paid to do it) is in effect a non-play, a non-novel.

In "The Story of a Novel" Wolfe sought to explain his prodigality: a memory characterized "in a more than ordinary degree by the intensity of its sense impressions" would leave him no peace. In Paris "suddenly I would remember the iron railing that goes along the boardwalk at Atlantic City. I could see it instantly just the way it was, the heavy iron pipe; its raw, galvanized look; the way the joints were fitted together." Write, then, an evocation of that railing! "I cannot really say the book was written. It was something that took hold of me and possessed me." He realized, he said, the "fatal dangers" of such "insane hunger to devour the entire body of human experience". But "the only way I could meet it was to meet it squarely, not with reason but with life". When he burned the life clear out at thirty-eight the seal was set on a legend.

The erudition, though? True, at Harvard he set out to devour the Widener Library (in one day, H. G. Wells's *Undying Fire*, Swift's *Tale of a Tub*, then two essays by Emerson, with

Two poems by Thom Gunn

Terminal

(J. L., August 86)

The eight years difference in age seems now
Disparity so wide between the two
That when I see the man who armoured stood
Resistant to all help however good
Now helped through day itself, eased into chairs,
Or else led step by step down the long stairs
With firm and gentle guidance by his friend,
Who loves him, through each effort to descend,
Each wavering, each attempt made to complete
An arc of movement and bring down the feet
As if with that spare strength he used to enjoy,
I think of Oedipus, old, led by a boy.

Still Life

(L. H., December 5, 86)

I shall not soon forget
The greyish-yellow skin
To which the face had set:
Lids tight: nothing of his,
Various from within,
Played on the surfaces.

He still found breath, and yet
It was an obscure knack.
I shall not soon forget
The angle of his head,
Arrested and reared back
On the crisp field of bed,

Back from what he could neither
Accept, as one opposed,
Nor, as a life-long breather,
Consentingly let go,
The tube his mouth enclosed
In an astonished O.

Leslie Stephen's life of Pope for dessert). "Ten, twelve, fifteen books a day", he would boast, "are nothing", and "nothing" seems about right. What's metabolized from *A Tale of a Tub* gulped down in an hour, one more layer in that Wells-Emerson-Stephen sandwich, is not really an open question. True, bits might stick, a prose mannerism or two, though I'll ask to be spared combing through Wolfe's shaggy hide for a crumb or two from Swift. Nor, digestion apart, was he ever really thorough. When he decided that, after all, he was going to be a novelist, he turned out not to have read any Melville or Twain or Lawrence, and he never did manage to finish anything by Henry James.

(Here we seem to be in 1926, and this may be the place to remark on one failing of Professor Donald's who will specify month and day but leave us in constant doubt about the year. His own sense of year-to-yearness can be less than perfect. To say that Wolfe in 1926 was "not yet acquainted with" Faulkner is to forget that 1926 was the year of Faulkner's first novel, *Soldiers' Pay*. And the sentence about — a 1921 — rejection of "the Cambridge [Massachusetts] enthusiasm for T. S. Eliot as poet-philosopher of classicism, restraint and despair" seems entailed in anachronism; Eliot's "classical" avowal came as late as 1928, and *The Waste Land*, magnet for undergraduate "despair", wasn't published before 1922. Nor do I make out when Wolfe discovered *Ulysses*. Donald says it "still had to be smuggled into the United States because it was considered pornography", but that applies to any year from 1922 to 1935. Were Wolfe's "whoops of joy" really emitted as early as the year of publication?)

The case for erudite conscious artistry is thin; of the outlines adduced in evidence of careful planning, it remains only to remark that on Donald's own showing they were numerous, sketchy, repeatedly superseded, and only scantily fulfilled. When Edward Aswell confronted a posthumous chaos he succinctly described as "a mess", Wolfe's long outline for *The Web* and the *Rock* proved quite unhelpful.

Some of the chapters Wolfe listed had never been written; others existed only in fragmentary form; many more were present in several versions, differing sometimes slightly, sometimes very significantly. Parts of the manuscript were written in the first person, but other sections were told in the third person by an omniscient narrator. The protagonist

was variously named Eugene Gant, David Hawke, Paul (or George) Spangler, Joe Doaks, and George Webber. Sometimes he seemed to come from a normal, if noisy, household; at other times he was the product of a broken marriage and lived with his ancient, superstitious Aunt Maw . . .

And so on, and Aswell was pretty much on his own. His position was in every way unenviable. A very junior editor, he'd assured his firm that a Great Novel to come would justify



Thomas Wolfe and the manuscript of *Of Time and the River*; the photograph is reproduced from the book reviewed here.

the huge advance they paid, and with his author dead it was up to him to produce it. He elided, transposed, wrote transitions, even cut one knot by inventing a character around whom some stray material could be draped. The "mess" finally yielded two novels, *The Web* and *the Rock* and *You Can't Go Home Again*, and Harpers even stated that both books "had been finished and turned over to his publishers in May, 1938" by Thomas Wolfe.

Donald has hard words for most of this story: "much less defensible"; "misrepresented"; "thoroughly misleading". He has "read every draft, and every carbon copy, of all of Wolfe's manuscripts", and compared them line by line with the typescripts Aswell sent to the printer, and he finds Aswell taking "impermissible liberties".

to uncover, and that the legend, while essentially true, is exaggerated in places. Less of a saint than his reputation suggests, he had affairs with Pamela Churchill (now Pamela Harriman) and Marlene Dietrich. While covering Adlai Stevenson's presidential campaign in 1956 as a supposedly disinterested journalist, he acted as a secret adviser to the candidate. And his leaving CBS seems, in Sperber's account, like the mutual disengagement at the end of a long successful marriage, rather than a martyrdom. Sperber has managed to talk to everybody who knew Murrow, including the elusive Paley, who in telling his side of the story of Murrow's parting with CBS convincingly dispels the notion that he was villain. It's clear that Murrow manufactured confrontations with Paley, and that Paley stopped defending him against his bureaucratic enemies when Murrow started to treat Paley as if he were a crass and cowardly businessman. Murrow's affection and respect were extremely important to Paley; they were proof of his stature as a corporate statesman.

Still, Murrow was without doubt an impressive man. As a journalist, he had wonderful instincts about where the important stories were and how to communicate them simply and directly to a mass audience. In recent years American conservatives have deified liberals who talk about repression in America in the 1950s, as if they were describing Hungary. But it becomes clear in the course of Sperber's merciless piling on of facts that Murrow's courage during the McCarthy period was not just a pose. In his world, at least, many people were ruined by McCarthyite witch-hunts. Some of his friends killed themselves. Apart from one real slip, when he acceded to a CBS policy that required his employees (during peacetime) to sign an oath of loyalty to the United States

That far, he's faithful to his vision of Wolfe: genius worthy of immaculate preservation. But then he does a remarkable and heartening thing. Scrupulously, he takes inventory of the choices Aswell had before him, to conclude that, though someone else would have executed it differently, there was no other plan any editor could have followed. And with that admission on Donald's penultimate page, there evaporates, I fear, the Wolfe-o-the-Wisp of his cherishing, that scrupulous major innovative novelist.

Thomas Wolfe's plot, over and over, was his own life story. One time he'd planned a two-part book about an innocent, a Candidate, its second half "objective", free of intrusions and dithyrambs. That, he saw, was the way to stop repeating himself. But within months all manner of stuff the plan had not foreseen began spiralling into its vortex, and *The Vision of Spangler's Paul* was "slowly becoming another, even more inclusive, autobiography of Thomas Wolfe". (It bogged down; Aswell drew on his drafts for *The Web* and *the Rock*, as he drew even on pages discarded from *Look Homeward, Angel*. You could drop a piece of any Wolfe book into any other.)

The *Bildungsroman*, that was Wolfe's sole métier: that big, resonant, potentially Wagnerian, nineteenth-century form. (Never mind that Joyce had killed it in *A Portrait*, or that of its anti-matter a Kingsley Amis would one day make a *Lucky Jim*.) Wolfe celebrated himself and he sang himself. Donald's best subject is the self he celebrated: boozing, leeching, scribbling, incomprehensibly fascinating. "They were in many ways remarkable persons", so Mrs Leavis said of the great bestsellers, and we've heard her on their "magnificent vitality".

It's for the pages from which his man's vitality spills — the account, for instance, of the mad intercontinental romance with Aline Bernstein, a talented married Jewess whom Wolfe both worshipped and half despised — that we remember Professor Donald's headlong narrative. In a quite different way he is as talented a writer as Wolfe, as is proved by the fact that the Bernstein episode ended, we don't feel that Wolfe needs kicking. Never mind his half-hearted hope that the man to whom he has devoted years of research was really an Apollonian genius. It's a pleasure to have enjoyed their company.

government, Murrow remained steadfast, and he paid a price for it.

Of all the larger themes that Sperber illustrates profusely but does not discuss, the most interesting is that of the curious relationship between American television and government. The licences that the Federal Communications Commission confers on the owners of television and radio stations constitute immensely valuable concessions, which are granted free of charge. For American broadcasting companies, which like to present themselves as being fiercely independent, the spectre of the non-renewal of licence is terrifying. There is, in fact, a set of dual standards in operation: news departments cover each administration in Washington, with apparent impartiality, but at the corporate level their directors must be careful not to offend the administration in question. It's often said that broadcasting is afraid of its advertisers, but Murrow's travails stemmed from CBS's fear of government.

The irony is that, because it is an explicit condition of the licence that broadcasters show themselves to be public-spirited, they tend to provide far more high-minded commentary than is warranted by audience interest. Television stations are under pressure to produce innocuous editorials that will satisfy the public-service requirements without making anyone angry. This is not easy, especially for journalists of integrity. It was Murrow's editorializing rather than his reporting that caused his downfall at CBS — though his role as an editor was one that CBS had encouraged, because it gave the network a gloss of high-mindedness. If it were not for the existence of government broadcasting licence, Murrow would not have been in trouble for his unvarnished opinions — but the licence exists, and probably would have been asked to give them in the first place.

The garçon before the fall

John Melmoth

JOHN MALCOLM BRINNIN
Truman Capote: A memoir
182pp. Sidgwick and Jackson. £9.95.
0 283 99423 1

It may be that no biography of Truman Capote will prove more eloquent than the sequence of photographs taken by Irving Penn between 1947 and 1979. Penn's Capote is first and last grotesque. The author of *Other Voices, Other Rooms* and the early stories for *Hopewell Bazaar* and *Mademoiselle* was tiny and brittle, his "butterfly" hair in bangs, languorous, demure, insouciant, pretty and pugnacious, "garçon fatal". The author of the missive *Answered Prayers* looked like a bloated emaciate with a stocking over his head. Between the two images there was too much booze and a reputed \$60,000-a-year cocaine habit. Literature had been replaced by self-publicization: the pursuit of a reputation had elbowed out the development of a career.

John Malcolm Brinnin first met Capote in 1946 and remained in more or less regular contact with him until the latter died in 1982. His account of their friendship is remarkable for the tenacity with which he fights a losing battle against an inclination to give his subject's life the simple shape of a moral tale. It was always clear to him that Capote's arriviste dalliances would end in tears — "What would he get from the notoriously rich that he wouldn't have to pay for?" At times he could be testy: "His literary opinions had become blurred in a myopia of dollar signs." In the end, however, he could only watch helplessly as Capote dragged himself "between hospitals and drying out clinics, and between intervals of rehabilitation and episodes of incontinent squall beyond the wildest depravities of grace he had himself ever described or imagined".

Truman Capote: A memoir is not a literary biography of the kind that offer a general theory of the man or his creative processes. Its real subject is the complexity of an apparently paradigmatic case of opposites attracting. Brinnin was a conventional, establishment academic; Capote was flamboyant, rascally, an anti-intellectual. When the *enfant* was too terrible, the straight man was inclined to turn away in fastidious scepticism, casting doubt, for example, on Capote's claim to have had affairs with the actors John Garfield and Errol Flynn (also notched up in *Music for Chameleons*).

As Capote rose through the ranks of the rich, Brinnin felt increasingly like a country cousin, a role which amused Capote to no end — "You goin' be one if I cornball all your life?" Brinnin's emollient and commitment to the academy were, however, matched by a penchant for the proximity of the famous. He was as disposed as his subject to drop names: "On that day I was in London with my new friend Edith Sitwell." When not ogling Capote, he was attempting to keep a check on Dylan Thomas, whom he chaperoned on his drunk and disorderly lecture tours around America.

A good deal of the material in *Truman Capote: A memoir* first appeared in Brinnin's *Sextet* (1982), which recorded what, up to the publication of *In Cold Blood*, was a charmed life. The years of spectacular decline are dealt with more briefly both because they were the province of gossip columnists and because Capote and Brinnin were seeing less of each other. The new memoir is written with just sufficient wit and style to indicate what Capote saw in Brinnin. To the end, however, the author remains baffled by the paradoxes that fuelled Capote's antics. He is, he confesses, mystified by the process whereby "the young devotee of Flaubert and Chekhov has, in middle age, become a walking advertisement for 'Sonny and Cher'". Nor does Brinnin himself escape unscathed. It must have cost him a lot to quote from an interview published shortly after Capote's death in which he was asked about their relationship: "He's never been a close friend of mine. . . . he never really was a close friend."

Views from the tower

Garry Wills

D. W. MEINIG
The Shaping of America: A geographical perspective on 500 years of history
Volume One: Atlantic America, 1492-1800.
500pp. Yale University Press. £35.
0 300 03548 9

"L'histoire est d'abord toute géographique." Michelet can make readers believe that claim while we are under the spell of the magical hundred pages called *Tableau de la France*. Each region has its own "génie". Champagne, "naïve and mordant", breeds satire along with grapes, as Burgundy breeds oratory, or Languedoc freedom; and Provence brings forth Matabeau. The volcanic clefts of Auvergne, where one "freezes on lava", helped shape Pascal's divided mind. The spirit of place becomes a "fatalité des lieux". Michelet has recast Montesquieu's meteorology of liberty, by which freedom rose as temperature dropped, into a study of distinct ecosystems (as they would be called today).

An earlier American geography, cautiously Montesquieuian, tried to fit regions of the mind to the topographical shapes of North America; only, where Montesquieu measured freedom by the thermometer, Frederick Jackson Turner measured it by the odometer — so long as one set a westerling course. The farther west you went, the freer you became. Jefferson was the real father of this school. He believed so much in the spirit of place that he discouraged Americans from travelling abroad, lest they breathe in royalism from the captured air of older realms. He wrote to his nephew from Paris that Americans "first and most delicate passions are hackneyed on unworthy objects here, and they carry home only the dregs, insufficient to make themselves or anybody else happy". He warned Americans who would travel to take only the most distant and guarded looks at aristocratic lairs, "to be seen as you would see

the tower of London or Menagerie de Versailles with their Lions, tigers, hyaenas & other beasts of prey, standing in the same relation to their fellows". Jefferson wanted Americans to stay uncontaminated in their countryside, not seeing too much even of their own continent's cities. The West was for him a vast receptacle where virtuous yeomen could be placed far from the lures and vices of cosmopolis, whose "affections are weakened by being extended over more objects". The future American was to concentrate on the basic things, which are local: "Be good, be learned, & be industrious, and you will not want the aid of travelling to render you precious to your country, dear to your friends, happy within yourself." In the world of Jefferson and Turner, virtue is absorbed through the soles of one's shoes, the land itself forming its own workers.

But how were the virtuous yeomen to reach the promised land held out to them in the West? Jefferson had to stretch his own governmental authority to buy Louisiana for them. And D. W. Meinig, in *The Shaping of America*, points out that the people went to the frontier in Conestoga wagons invented and manufactured in the East. They were moving, moreover, not towards "virgin land", but to "a ragged, bloody edge of empire", where military forces cleared the way against those Indians who had survived a first and deadliest assault of diseases carried to them by Europeans. Jefferson was right to think that travel contaminated. But his European yeomen were the carriers of the infection, not its victims. Humans remade the environment before they could be remade by it. European "man" did not confront "nature" from some vantage-point outside it. He was himself a mobile ecosystem, disturbing all the environments he invaded.

Meinig's *Atlantic America, 1492-1800*, the first volume of three, is a post-Turnerian geography for the age of Fernand Braudel and Immanuel Wallerstein. The text is full of

"thrusters". "Wedge" does heavy service as a verb. The maps are as posted with arrows, pointers and other traffic signs as any California freeway. Places are noted as things being moved through, glimpsed hurriedly as one is rushed on. This is a geography of endless de-racination, geography at war with place. For Meinig, the most important spatial relationships in early American history are not the settlers' wrestlings with fields and forest, but imperial lines of authority stretched across the Atlantic, determining the flow of supplies and skills that made commercial expansion in North America so implacable. Even when Americans broke the imperial tie with England, they were able to win independence only by playing on global tensions, so that their war was won for them by France in the Caribbean. And federation of the newly independent seaboard colonies was made both necessary and possible by the pressures to control western territories still menaced by the English out of Canada, the Spanish out of Louisiana, and surviving Indian resistors. America, like a shark, could only keep breathing by moving.

Meinig's method seems to produce social and political history, rather than geography. One can read page after page of his book with barely a mention of places or spatial relations. If western capitalism thrusts into and ravishes place, why study place at all? Why call the result geography? Yet Meinig recognizes that the act of seizure alters the captors as well as the captured. The outposts of empire broke away from its centre precisely because they had become marginally different from the originators of the impulse that planted them. This marks an alteration in the mode and pace and self-awareness of the conquerors, not an ending of their conquest. The Europeans still overcame the Indians, though they had to learn from the Indians in order to defeat them, recruiting natives to their own undoing. In the same way, adaptation to geographical circumstances becomes a vehicle of European dominance, not a denial of it. Meinig does not suffi-

ciently describe this process — for example, he does not show how use of the French fleet to win the War of Independence depended on the seasonal nature of fighting in the hurricane-ridden Caribbean. But often he does show with great skill how adjustment to local circumstances altered the nature of the occupying force's operation. Settlers in Virginia, for instance, raised Georgian country homes in American forests; but the homes were not diffused throughout a county system like England's. Because of the nook-shotten Chesapeake Bay, they were clustered in entirely different patterns on the land.

The Chesapeake was an important part of the Atlantic commercial world, but its oceanic trunk line had no American focus; instead, west of Cape Charles it frayed into a vast dendritic pattern of fine threads, as the several hundred ships that annually carried this most valued trade of North America ascended the rivers and creeks to hundreds of collection points dotted through this water-laced countryside. The great majority of the settlers lived within a few miles of ocean shipping. Some of these landings were private plantation wharfs; others were storehouses, "factories", or "rolling houses" (referring to hogsheads of tobacco) serving a local district, the larger of which may have had several British (mainly Scottish) agents in residence competing for the trade. Thus Chesapeake commerce was unusually simple and direct between American producers and European shippers, without the mediation of American services in American towns, a feature strongly rooted in the historic patterns of the tobacco trade.

Thus, despite unobtrusive inland urbanization, early Virginia did not form a bourgeoisie on the scale of Boston or Philadelphia (cities that collaborated in refining the pure burghermentality of Benjamin Franklin). This local circumstance helped form Jefferson's attitude towards towns; but, paradoxically, as Meinig sees, such an "agrarian" isolationism was itself the product of imperial trade relations.

Geography has now been so absorbed into the social sciences that Meinig has been criticized for his traditional emphasis on purely local variables like vernacular building styles. Interspersed amid his forty-three specially

Doomed voice

Nicholas Lemann

A. M. SPERBER
Murrow: His life and times
795pp. Michael Joseph. £17.95.
0 7181 2809 5

From the late 1930s until 1960 Edward R. Murrow was the acknowledged leader in American news broadcasting, but saying this fails to convey the myth that has grown up around him. Today he has a reputation as the Abraham Lincoln of television — a dark, lanky son of the Western soil who through his integrity and folk eloquence made his way to a kind of doomed greatness. His story, through many retellings, has become a legend in the United States.

It goes like this. In London during the Blitz Murrow found his voice, and his "you-are-there" radio broadcasts mesmerized America and persuaded public opinion, which had previously favoured isolationism, to sympathize with the British. Back in New York after the war he more or less invented the crusading television documentary, but his relationship with his employer, the CBS network, gradually turned sour. Murrow confronted issues that his Chairman, William Paley, preferred to treat less directly — segregation, the vagility of television itself — and he stood up to McCarthyism. Finally Paley, acting through his corporate minions, betrayed Murrow, who then left CBS and took a face-saving job in the new Kennedy Administration; soon after he contracted lung cancer and died, broken-hearted, in his fifties.

A. M. Sperber's exhaustive definitive biography (the product of twelve years of work) leaves one feeling that there are now no facts about Murrow left for future researchers

to uncover, and that the legend, while essentially true, is exaggerated in places. Less of a saint than his reputation suggests, he had affairs with Pamela Churchill (now Pamela Harriman) and Marlene Dietrich. While covering Adlai Stevenson's presidential campaign in 1956 as a supposedly disinterested journalist, he acted as a secret adviser to the candidate. And his leaving CBS seems, in Sperber's account, like the mutual disengagement at the end of a long successful marriage, rather than a martyrdom. Sperber has managed to talk to everybody who knew Murrow, including the elusive Paley, who in telling his side of the story of Murrow's parting with CBS convincingly dispels the notion that he was villain. It's clear that Murrow manufactured confrontations with Paley, and that Paley stopped defending him against his bureaucratic enemies when Murrow started to treat Paley as if he were a crass and cowardly businessman. Murrow's affection and respect were extremely important to Paley; they were proof of his stature as a corporate statesman.

Still, Murrow was without doubt an impressive man. As a journalist, he had wonderful instincts about where the important stories were and how to communicate them simply and directly to a mass audience. In recent years American conservatives have deified liberals who talk about repression in America in the 1950s, as if they were describing Hungary. But it becomes clear in the course of Sperber's merciless piling on of facts that Murrow's courage during the McCarthy period was not just a pose. In his world, at least, many people were ruined by McCarthyite witch-hunts. Some of his friends killed themselves. Apart from one real slip, when he acceded to a CBS policy that required his employees (during peacetime) to sign an oath of loyalty to the United States

government, Murrow remained steadfast, and he paid a price for it.

Of all the larger themes that Sperber illustrates profusely but does not discuss, the most interesting is that of the curious relationship between American television and government. The licences that the Federal Communications Commission confers on the owners of television and radio stations constitute immensely valuable concessions, which are granted free of charge. For American broadcasting companies, which like to present themselves as being fiercely independent, the spectre of the non-renewal of licence is terrifying. There is, in fact, a set of dual standards in operation: news departments cover each administration in Washington, with apparent impartiality, but at the corporate level their directors must be careful not to offend the administration in question. It's often said that broadcasting is afraid of its advertisers, but Murrow's travails stemmed from CBS's fear of government.

The irony is that, because it is an explicit condition of the licence that broadcasters show themselves to be public-spirited, they tend to provide far more high-minded commentary than is warranted by audience interest. Television stations are under pressure to produce innocuous editorials that will satisfy the public-service requirements without making anyone angry. This is not easy, especially for journalists of integrity. It was Murrow's editorializing rather than his reporting that caused his downfall at CBS — though his role as an editor was one that CBS had encouraged, because it gave the network a gloss of high-mindedness. If it were not for the existence of government broadcasting licence, Murrow would not have been in trouble for his unvarnished opinions — but the licence exists, and probably would have been asked to give them in the first place.

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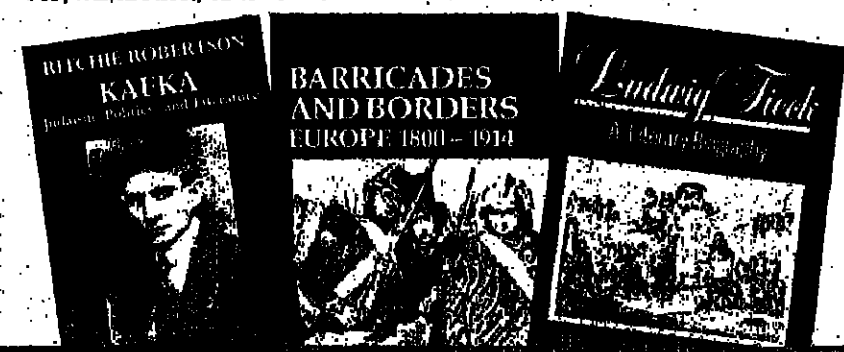
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drawn maps (with all their thrusting arrows) are paintings and engravings and drawings of townscapes, farms, private and public structures. For Meinig, these local phenomena express the vision that human beings try to impose on the place where they arrive. Adaptations have to be made, but those often involve a selection from available models they have carried with them. Thus colonial Virginia had Georgian country homes, but Boston began by looking like medieval London, and Philadelphia imitated the baroque London of Wren. Here even Jefferson, who built Palladian homes of red Piedmont brick, would be on Meinig's side. Nothing was more important for him than the architecture of a site.

When Americans insisted on travelling to Europe, Jefferson's advice was for them to buy a map of any town they arrived at and then: "Go to the top of a steeple to have a view of the town and it's [sic] environs." Here is the justification for Meinig's townscapes. What Jefferson's Americans were to look at most intently from the tower was architecture. For Americans, who had such a booming rate of expansion that they must "double our houses" every twenty years, architecture was "among the most important arts: and it is desirable to introduce taste into an art which shews so much".

Meinig's maps are clear and helpful, though there can never be too many or too large maps in a work of this sort. One deficiency is the lack

of colour. At a time when ingenuity in the graphics applied to cartography is remaking the art, works like the Newberry Library *Atlas of American History* show how much can be symbolized by the creative use of colour in maps. It is useful to contrast Meinig's maps of the revolutionary war with those of the *Atlas*, where not only the shifting theatres of combat, but the varying intensities of each encounter, are literally highlighted by dimmed or brightened patches of colour. The dynamic nature of modern geography is at odds with the static assumptions of traditional map-making, and the demonstrative tools for indicating this are at hand. This may be criticized by those who continue to think of geography as the study of

that stablest thing on earth – the earth itself. But even the land shifts in our time of dynamic geology; it breathes change, toxic or regenerative. Besides, even Michelet ends his *Tableau* – which was written to introduce France of the Middle Ages – by saying that the earthquake of the Revolution tumbled people out of their furrows and made them interact more with each other than with their points of origin. History only *begun* as a matter of pure geography. Michelet concludes his survey of the provinces with this dramatic farewell: "L'histoire a effacé la géographie." Meinig does not go that far. He has not obliterated places, just the myths of place; not geography itself, not the land itself, just Turner's never-never land.

Independence and after

Anthony Pagden

LESLIE BETHELL (Editor)
Cambridge History of Latin America
Volume Three
945pp. £60.
Volume Four
676pp. £45.
Volume Five
951pp. £50.
Cambridge University Press
0521232244, 0521232252 and 0521245176

These three volumes cover the period of Latin American history from the Independence movements in the early nineteenth century to the 1930s. Volume Three deals with the Independence itself and the initial consolidation of the new states; Volume Four contains general essays on a number of themes in political, social, economic and cultural history in the period 1870–1930; Volume Five consists of detailed individual studies of each of the major areas during the same period. Taken together, they form a history of the origins and consolidation of the modern Latin American republics.

As with the first two volumes of this Cambridge History (reviewed in the TLS, June 14, 1985) the standard of scholarship is high, if also uneven, and the whole enterprise has clearly been prevented from flying apart only by Leslie Bethell's skilful editing. Like the previous volumes these contain the best of a rather traditional historiography with, despite the chapters on religion, art and music, a largely political and economic leaning. Timothy Anna writes perceptively on the Independence movements in Mexico, David Bushnell on those in South America and Bethell himself on Brazil. Tullio Halperin is often interesting and always authoritative on the post-Independence economy. There is a characteristically succinct and theoretically informed chapter on the Mexican Revolution by John Womack, which, although it does not advance very far beyond his previous work, is still probably the best of the essays in any of the volumes. Michael Hall and Hobart Spalding are fascinating on early Latin American labour movements, as is James Scobie on the growth of Latin American cities.

These volumes are not, however, without their shortcomings. Women's history, which made a brief and undistinguished appearance in Volume Two, is unrepresented, and the Amerindian population has almost vanished off the map altogether. Even less attention is paid to culture than in the first two volumes and what there is too detached from the essays on politics and economics. There is too little, also, on the role of ideology, in both the insurgency movements and the creation of the new republics. Frank Safford's chapter, "Politics, Ideology and Society in post-Independence Spanish America" (Volume Three), has a lot more on politics and society than it does on ideology, and what it does have is not very satisfactory. I would have liked to have seen at least one chapter on the political theories and, perhaps more crucially, the political languages which structured and informed the new Latin American republics and which still today very much determine the contexts of political debate and political action. Charles A. Hale's "Political and Social Ideas in Latin America 1870–1930" (Volume Four) provides a useful account of the mainstream of Latin American political thinking but never really comes to

grips with the theory which underpinned it. (It seems curious, to say the least, in a discussion of liberalism to mention neither Mill nor Bentham.)

The editor's decision, as he says, to concentrate on "the evolution of internal structures" was perhaps inevitable. But Latin American Studies already suffer from excessive parochialism and there is now a very real need for an understanding not only of the place of Latin America within the modern international system, but, more crucially, of the extent to which the problems it has faced (and faces still) can be better understood as the same kind of problems with which other historical communities have grappled. There are, of course, essays which do place Latin America in the wider context: D. A. G. Waddell on the international dimensions to the Independence movements (Volume Three), for instance; excellent studies by William Glade and Rosemary Thorp on the international economy, and by Robert Freeman Smith on the relationship between Latin America, Europe and the United States (Volume Four). But they are a very small part of the whole.

All the essays in these volumes are ultimately concerned with the evolution after Independence of a number of new and often radically dissimilar nation states. As Safford rightly says, the "most important theme in the political history of Spanish America in this period is the difficulty encountered in establishing viable new states after the separation from Spain". But these difficulties were more than merely how to construct a viable polity out of the old régime; they were far more complexly how to make that polity legitimate, a task which few, if any, Latin American states have yet fully realized. Here a glance outside Latin America, at British North America a century earlier, at Garibaldi's Italy or Bismarck's Germany or at the modern "New States" in Asia and Africa, might have thrown some much-needed light on nation-building as a social and cultural process.

Like much Latin American history, many of these essays are short on theory for the larger task they have to perform. Hugh Thomas's otherwise pedestrian little piece on Cuba, the last of the colonies to achieve Independence (Volume Three), leaves us with the intimation that the historical cause of Castro's revolution might after all be found in "an affection (if not affection) for heroism and revolt" endemic since the 1870s in the "Cuban national culture". Theoretical sophistication was never Thomas's strong point, but this particular claim leaves one with the suspicion that, for those on the Right, "culture" may be merely another term for a solidly regressive "national character", to be defended or deplored largely depending on where you stand.

But no project on this scale can hope to satisfy every reader in all, or even most, of its parts. What it will surely do is to help establish a set of problems, a field of inquiry, which in the past has neither been very easy to identify (except in simple geographical terms) nor, it must be admitted, very well served. It will also perhaps, when it is complete, point to the ways in which the modern Latin American states are all the heirs of a common set of political and cultural problems which cannot be explained solely in terms of their own particular histories. If Leslie Bethell achieves that, then he will, indeed, have fulfilled Lord Acton's ambitions for the first Cambridge History.

Revolutionary roles

Raymond Carr

MANUEL CABALLERO
Latin America and the Comintern 1919–1943
213pp. Cambridge University Press. £25.
0521325811

Most works on communism in Latin America have treated the histories of the individual communist parties in each nation. Yet these parties were *sui generis* in the sense that they formed sections of a centralized, international organization, the Comintern, founded in 1919. In Lenin's view the Comintern was not a federation of its constituent sections – federation was the primal sin of the First and Second Internationals. It was a single world party. The national parties were to be guided and, if necessary, disciplined from Moscow; their task until the Seventh Congress of the International in 1935 was to help bring about the world socialist revolution.

Manuel Caballero's remarkable book, *Latin America and the Comintern 1919–1943*, treats communism as part of a world movement. It is a difficult and daunting task. The Comintern was frequently engaged in clandestine activities by definition difficult to track down. Did the Caribbean Bureau exist other than in the imagination of the FBI? Was there a conference of Latin American parties in Montevideo in 1935; or, if it took place at all, did it meet in Moscow? The central archives of the Comintern are closed, even to Communist scholars; for they reveal the state secrets of a major power. The books of survivors provide an unreliable supplement. Caballero overcomes these difficulties as far as meticulous scholarship allows. His book is an intelligent and balanced account of tortuous ideological posturings, of shadow organizations; moreover, his detective work exhibits a quality not often found in writers on communism and which is even rarer among Hispanic writers: a sense of irony.

Though the Comintern always supposed that the World Revolution, conceived on a European model, would be aided by a revolution of the colonial, semi-colonial and dependent peoples, in the context of that revolution Latin America occupied a subordinate role. In the American continent it would be "led" by the industrialized United States. This represents a triumph of theory over reality. If the Latin American revolution must wait on the Northern American revolution then even the most optimistic revolutionary – and that the Comintern continued to believe in the possibility of World Revolution is an extraordinary case of self-intoxication – must recognize that the Latin American revolution would come in at the tail end. Compared with the United States party, the Communist party in Chile was a genuine mass party; yet its importance was consistently underestimated by the Comintern, just as it overestimated the Argentinian party largely because it was led by that most obedient *apparatchik*, Vittorio Godovilla, who died in Moscow in 1960.

Even after "the discovery of Latin America" in 1928, when the Comintern recognized that the continent "was more revolutionary than we had supposed", the theoreticians of the Comintern never got to grips with Latin American reality. Leninism was always uncomfortable with the peasants: they were allies in the revolution but never more than a tactical ally.

potential enemies surrounding the proletariat with "a petty bourgeois atmosphere". Yet a revolution in Latin America must take peasants into account. The revolution must, of course, be led by the party of the proletariat. But how was a party of the proletariat to be created where a proletariat, in the European sense, scarcely existed and where industrial workers were peasants at one remove? The theoreticians of the Comintern, as Caballero observes, wrapped themselves in ambiguities, continuing to talk of bourgeois national democratic revolutions.

Latin American communist parties were sometimes the creation of the Comintern; but others were local creations – for instance in Ecuador and Chile, engaged in fighting local battles with considerable success. While Codovilla and his compatriot Ghioledi never deserted the party line and the notion of a Latin American revolution as "supportive", others did not relish relegation to the second league as "colonial or semi colonial" countries. Victims of imperialism they might be, but they were independent nations whose revolutionary potential varied from country to country. The Mexican painter David Siqueiros became a hard-core Stalinist who attempted to assassinate Trotsky; but he came from a country proud of its revolutionary tradition and in 1928 he criticized the notion that the Latin American Revolution was merely a support. The "subjective conditions" of Latin America were "frankly revolutionary". If we do not take the leadership of the uprising that insurrection will be carried out by the bourgeois parties.

Of particular interest is Caballero's analysis of the consequences of the 1935 Congress and the abandonment of Stalin's "class against class" for the Popular Front. Prestes's revolution in Brazil in 1935 was neither typical of the "third period" nor a last step in the world revolution in which the Comintern no longer believed. It was a *pronunciamento* rather than a revolution as the Comintern had conceived it; it was to be the last attempt to "go it alone" by taking power "from the outside". "Taking from the inside" was to be the work of Popular Fronts; but the victory of the Popular Front in Chile came as "a late born child" when the Comintern was moving towards "National Union". The Chilean party went beyond the Popular Front to argue in 1944 for a post-war government with the participation of "all from the capitalists to the workers, that is, from Conservatives to Communists". With the United States as an ally at Tehran, anti-imperialism went out of the window with the class struggle. Post-war reconstruction "by policies of collaboration and aid" would replace imperialist economic colonization and exploitation.

For the Comintern, Latin America never escaped from its "supportive" role. Yet, as Caballero concludes, if its actions constituted a chain of defeats, its theoreticians established the framework of Marxist-Leninist debate in Latin America that has persisted. In its twenty-four years of existence neither the Comintern nor its sections led a victorious revolution in Latin America. Yet Latin American revolutionaries did "turn to the theoretical propositions of the Comintern to analyze their problems of development", as was the case with the Cubans. Thus the Comintern has won "a kind of victory in defeat" in Latin America. Its failure and its legacies are exposed in this scholarly and sensitive book, which is a work of solid scholarship and a valuable contribution to the study of Latin American history.

Japanese discussions

Brian Moeran

PETER N. DALE
The Myth of Japanese Uniqueness
278pp. Croom Helm. £25.
0709908997
RONALD DORE
Flexible Rigidities: Industrial policy and structural adjustment in the Japanese economy 1970–80
278pp. Athlone Press. £25.
0485112698
MAMORU IGA
The Thorn in the Chrysanthemum: Suicide and economic success in modern Japan
286pp. University of California Press. £15.95.
0529056485

There can be no argument that Japan has risen to the rank of economic superpower. Suddenly, everyone wants to know about the newly appointed *samurai* who live in "rabbit hutchies", playing the stock market with one hand, and *pachinko* pinball machines with the other. Those who went through their "Japanese experience" during the dark days of Western ignorance, when people still talked of Japan in terms of cherry blossoms, geisha and the Second World War, now find themselves with an audience. With much wailing and gnashing of teeth, they hold forth upon the whys and the wherefores of Japan's success. Cultural masochism is very much the rage.

That Western recognition – even admiration – of another race's way of doing things has finally come about merely proves to the Japanese how behind the times all foreigners are. For a hundred years now, they have been writing about themselves, intent upon finding out precisely what it is that makes them different from other peoples, and how that difference can be used to their own ends. This literature is known as *nihonjinron*, which literally means "discussions of the Japanese", and which addresses itself to such heavy issues as the origins of the Japanese language, the uniqueness of the Japanese as a race and those special qualities of their social organization, art and culture which set them apart from the Western world. In other words, *nihonjinron* is a splendid social "myth".

Doing the obvious

Jeremy Hardie

AKIO MORITA with EDWIN M. REINGOLD and MITSUKO SHIMOMURA
Made in Japan: Akio Morita and Sony.
350pp. Collins. £12.95.
0002177609

For nervous Westerners wondering which of their industries will be the next to be attacked by the Japanese, Sony is the archetypal villain. First, it began the annihilation of American and European television manufacture, with its technically innovative Trinitron product. Then, as if deliberately to disprove the jibe that the Japanese can only copy, it produced the Walkman, and thereby, as Akio Morita touchingly emphasizes, introduced not only a marvellous consumer toy, but also a new word to the *Oxford English Dictionary*. For a company which started in the old telephone operators' room of a deserted department store in Tokyo in 1946, that is no small achievement. And the main interest of *Made in Japan: Akio Morita and Sony* is the story of this achievement, which, details of geography apart, is, to some extent, merely another instance of the rags-to-riches archetype familiar enough in business literature. The writing is good plain fare, with scarcely a jarring phrase or clumsy sentence.

On the whole, Morita seems to be a straightforward, rather self-consciously (perhaps, because not typically Japanese) plain speaker, and like many successful business men, more interesting for what he has done than for how he thinks or says he has done it. It may be wrong to expect business men to write books which legitimate complex truths, since almost all business success consists of being able to do,

It is to the general body of *nihonjinron* literature that Peter Dale addresses himself. In bombastic prose, Dale tears apart *nihonjinron* theories with a thoroughness and inevitability that make prophecies of the Messiah's death seem positively light-hearted. For those who know about *nihonjinron*, and who have had to listen to the Japanese expounding (usually when drunk in bars) on their unique qualities, this book can be extremely funny. It is also a scholarly hatchet job, in which the outsider (or *gaijin*) beats the insiders at their own game. At the same time, perhaps because he himself has had to plough through such a large volume of pretentious literature, Dale seems determined to make his readers suffer too. They are never told precisely what the social function of *nihonjinron* is, nor how it is – or is not – reinforced by Japan's systems of education, government, and media communication. Criticisms are launched with unerring aim at targets of which the uninitiated remain ignorant until explosive impact. In this respect, the author bases his attacks upon the very premisses that guide his enemy's conduct, and we are allowed to witness a high-flown battle that has little bearing on the lives of the masses below. Hence, paradoxically, Dale serves merely to enhance *nihonjinron*'s rarified air, and once or twice his tone verges on the racist.

Flexible Rigidities is the first of two books by Ronald Dore (the second, still to be published, is *Taking Japan Seriously*) which examine Japan's society and economy in a comparative light. The paradoxical question which Professor Dore addresses is this: "why... should Japan, an economy which almost flaunts its rigidities as a matter of principle, be the most successful among the OECD countries at dynamically adjusting to the three challenges – absorbing the oil-price rises, controlling inflation at a low figure, and shifting the weight of its industrial structure decisively away from declining to competitive industries?" The full answer is not one that can be put simply for the lay reader. The short answer is: by *planned* change and adjustment in the structure of the Japanese economy. More specifically, this means a shift towards "post-industrialism" before the industrializing process itself has been completed, together with various structural changes in industrial organization. At lower levels of production, we find high rates of in-

and get others to do, quite obvious things. Business is not a reflective activity, and one should expect no more of a business man's autobiography than of a sportsman's.

Nevertheless, there are some novelties here, and some well-taken points. It is nice to see that much-envied champion of Japan Inc, MITI, berated as bureaucratic and indecisive, and "no great benefactor of the Japanese electronics industry". For the British and others who complain how difficult it is to sell in Japan, because of the insurmountable cultural and social barriers with which the Japanese surround themselves, there is a chilling account of how the Sony Corporation of America started in 1960 in New York, bewildered among uncomprehending and unsympathetic foreigners. But most of the book is like an SDP/Liberal Alliance industrial policy statement – much emphasis in the importance of employee commitment to the firm, the vicious effects of stock-market fluctuations on the ability of management to think long term, horror at the role of lawyers in American industry, and amazement that hiring and firing should be so commonplace outside Japan where it is the duty of the company to find new work when the old jobs go – and the duty of the workers willingly to adapt to those new jobs.

Most of the book is about Japan, some of it about America. Occasionally, Europe is mentioned. Britain appears once or twice: the first time when the Prince of Wales asks Sony to establish a factory in Wales – which they eventually do; Morita remarks, only half admiringly, that no Japanese would ever be as commercially pushy as Mrs Thatcher and Prince Charles. And then there is praise for England as having a (private) educational system which (unlike Japan and America) maintains proper educational standards.



"Pipe maker", from Once Upon a Time: Visions of Old Japan (112pp with eighty colour plates. Phaidon. £27.50. 0914919075), a collection of late nineteenth-century photographs by Felice Beato and Baron Raimund von Stillfried, with text by Pierre Loti, translated by Linda Coverdale.

vestment,

accompanied by "a capacity to innovate and absorb innovations rapidly"; in trade, a strong growth in exports to match the steep rise in import bills following the oil crisis. All this has been possible because of the "adjustment capacity" of Japanese firms (a capacity which Kenneth Baker might note includes high levels of education as one of its crucial factors); because of the system of enterprise, rather than trade, unions; and because of the close co-operation between government and business.

In giving his answer, Dore does his best to point out, not just what makes the Japanese economy successful, but where and how the British have gone wrong. This book's argument is sweeping, its information densely packed into 250 pages of text and tables – so dense, in fact, that it may well put off precisely those politicians and business men who need to learn what is really going on in Japan, if they

are to put their own parliamentary and merchant houses in order.

That some people always have to suffer for the successes of others is made abundantly clear by Dore, who does his best to balance delicately the pros and cons thereof. Mamoru Iga, on the other hand, seems less attuned to such necessary intellectual juggling as he inquires into "the painful cost of Japan's success story". *The Thorn in the Chrysanthemum* purports to examine the nature of suicide – in particular, as a social phenomenon among twentieth-century Japanese writers. Unfortunately, although he is hailed in the foreword as "The most eminent American-Japanese suicidologist in the world", Iga's explanations strike one as contradictory, his explanations as shallow, and his arguments as frequently circular. Unfortunately, this book is typical of the kind of *nihonjinron* approach so effectively destroyed in *The Myth of Japanese Uniqueness*.

THE TIMES SUPPLEMENTS

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Between sin and scandal

Patrick McCarthy

PIER PAOLO PASOLINI
Lettere 1940-1954, con una cronologia della vita e delle opere
Edited by Nico Naldini
353pp. Turin: Einaudi. L25,000.
88 06 59331 5

This first volume of Pasolini's collected letters covers the period from his undergraduate years, and recounts the apprenticeship, persecution and tribulations of a writer who continues to hypnotize Italian intellectuals. In his "Cronologia" Nico Naldini has filled in some of the gaps in Enzo Siciliano's biography (1982). Although Siciliano's judgments on Pasolini's life were generally correct, his book lacked detail. Drawing on Pasolini's unpublished diaries, the *Quaderni rossi*, Naldini provides much information on the Friulan years and in particular on Pasolini's homosexuality.

The volume opens in June 1940, and the Bologna period, 1940-43, reveals a young writer who was reaching maturity during the last years of Fascism. Pasolini's father was an army officer and an admirer of Mussolini, while Pasolini, who was born in 1922, had known nothing but Fascist rule. The first signs of his revolt were cultural. He and his friends admired artists who were distrusted by the régime: J. M. Synge, the American novelists from Melville to Erskine Caldwell, and French film directors like Jean Renoir. The Bologna painter Giorgio Morandi was the model of an artist who paid no attention to Fascist aesthetics. But most of all Pasolini, who had been writing poetry since he was seven, read Ungaretti and Montale.

Many of these early letters deal with the magazine *Il Settecento*, which Pasolini helped to edit in 1942-43. Whereas the mainstream intellectuals of what historians call "second-generation" or "left-wing" Fascism – such as Elio Vittorini or Renato Guttuso – were calling for

a committed culture, Pasolini seems to take a non-political stance. But in fact he too was groping for some sort of populism, as he demonstrates when he argues that Ungaretti is not just the poet of an élite but offers broad ethical lessons. Meanwhile the pessimistic tone of *Il Settecento* reflected the view that the war was lost, that Fascism was bankrupt and that there would be no "second generation".

A political awareness which was frustrated under Mussolini could grow after the Duce was overthrown in July 1943. By now Pasolini's father was in an Allied prisoner-of-war camp and the family had retreated to his mother's home in Casarsa, which lies on the Tagliamento river in Friuli. Pasolini, whose first poems in the Friulan dialect, *Poesie a Casarsa*, had appeared in 1942, found teaching jobs and scoured the countryside studying the various brands of dialect that the peasants used. From his letters it emerges that he rejected the conservative notion of a fixed Friulan language, stressing instead that newcomers like himself could re-invent the language and raise dialect poetry to the level of avant-garde writing. He also saw the Friulan language as the culture of an oppressed peasantry which could be politically awakened if its language were re-emphasized. This led Pasolini to join the Partito Comunista Italiano (PCI) in 1947 and to become the secretary of his cell.

Behind his decision there lay a riddle that this volume does nothing to resolve. Pasolini's brother, Guido, who had joined the non-Communist partisans, was killed in February 1945 by a Communist unit. While historians agree that the reasons for the Porzûs massacre were complex, there was no doubt in Guido's mind that the Communists wanted to destroy his unit because it was resisting not merely the Nazis but Yugoslav penetration into Friuli. A letter which he wrote to Pier Paolo, and which is published in the "Cronologia", describes what Guido perceived as a PCI concession to Tito. Whatever Pasolini's admiration for the PCI as the voice of the peasantry in the land struggles

of the post-war years, it seems surprising that he should have set aside this letter.

In 1943 Pasolini had his first homosexual experience. In the Bologna letters there are many references to girls but after brief courtships Pasolini pulls back. The *Quaderni rossi* explain why: a powerful erotic attraction to boys, which was a source of ecstasy, guilt and frustration. It provided the energy for the entire Friulan adventure, guiding Pasolini to reject conventional ideas about beauty, language and the social order. To say this is not, of course, to reduce his achievements to a series of sublimations. His dialect poetry is good, according to critics like Gianfranco Contini. But Pasolini's identity was caught up with his homosexuality: he notes that even the act of writing poetry confirmed him in his sense of being "abnormal".

In 1949 he was arrested and accused of interfering with minors. Christian Democrat newspapers exploited the case. Pasolini lost his teaching post. Friuli turned against him and he was expelled from the PCI. "I remain and shall remain a Communist", he replied and for the rest of his life he sought ties with the PCI, which is a further puzzle. His father, who had returned from the war as a paranoid alcoholic, made home life so intolerable that in January 1950 Pasolini and his mother fled to Rome.

He spent the next years in poverty, eking out a living by teaching and journalism. Yet, while one does not wish to belittle his hardships, one cannot help feeling – as he himself writes – that Rome was a further liberation. He could now live somewhat more openly, while the boys of the Rome subproletariat offered him experiences that were sexually and sometimes emotionally rich.

Once more his homoerotic urge led him to literary and political discoveries. *Ragazzi di vita* is not a conventional realistic novel that describes the Rome slums; instead it reconstructs the world as the slum-dwellers see it. It was also a political statement in that the sub-

proletariat was an affront both to Christian Democrat notions of progress and to the Communist myth of a rational working class. Pasolini was castigated by both sides and brought to trial for obscenity.

This volume of letters ends on a misleadingly calm note. By 1954 Pasolini was on the brink of success and yet his life was not really changing. The reason for this lies in his homosexuality. After the Friulan disgrace he writes that "I have never accepted my sin, I have never come to terms with my nature". Italian advocates of gay rights sometimes criticize Pasolini because he is of scant use to them in their campaign to present homosexuality as a normal and happy form of human behaviour, but the special interest of his case is that he lived his homosexuality as a necessary sin – "I was obliged to sin", he writes.

His religious sense, which surprised some of his admirers when it found objective expression in the film *The Gospel According to Matthew* (1964), had its origins in his predicament. Unable to deny or to accept his homosexuality, he sought refuge in Christian notions that the man who is scorned by his fellows is especially dear to God, that suffering redeems both the sufferer and others and that the bearer of scandal is playing his part in a divine plan.

Whether this is sound theology or a private mythology, it led Pasolini into headlong confrontations with Italian society. It also explains why it is misleading to present him merely as a victim who was persecuted and destroyed by prejudice. But Pasolini did not passively acquiesce in his own destruction. By his books, his films and most of all his public persona he challenged Italian society, and whenever it showed signs of tolerance, he challenged the tolerance in order to reveal the oppression that lay beneath. Pasolini did not want us to forgive or accept him; he wanted us to keep worrying about ourselves and about what constitutes our normality.

Playing it safe

Alan Stanbrook

JOHN HILL
Sex, Class and Realism: British cinema 1956-1963
228pp. British Film Institute. £16 (paperback, £7.95).
0851701329

In the late 1950s and early 60s, British cinema belatedly grew up – or so people thought at the time. Out, by and large, went the last traces of the Gainsborough bodice-rippers and the Korda imperial epics: in came the salty, sexy tang of working-class drama and humour. Here at last were "people as they really are" and a cinema that could match the French new wave. Films like *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* (1960), *A Taste of Honey* (1961), *The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner* (1962), appeared to herald a breakthrough to a new type of British movie. The trouble with realism, though, is that what seems vital and natural to one generation often seems false and dated to the next.

John Hill's study of this period in British cinema, *Sex, Class and Realism*, convincingly demonstrates that the British new wave – partly because it was under pressure from commercial interests, but also because of the limitations of its leading lights – consistently fudged the issues it raised. Indeed on the one hand to the new British theatre and novel (the Angry Young Men) and on the other to the short-lived documentary movement that called itself "Free Cinema", the realism in these films was superficial: "location shooting; regional accents; a little improvisation and some coyness".

Indeed, close study of the films of the time reveals a startling conformism. Though many of them were produced independently, commercial success depended on securing a release through one of the major circuits, run by the Rank Organization and Associated British Pictures Corporation. While the films' standards made them valuable to new audiences, they

these corporations would have understood or taken a chance on anything so formally audacious as, say, *A Bout de Souffle* (1959) or *Hiroshima Mon Amour* (1959). So contemporary British films stuck safely to the mode of nineteenth-century narrative realism, in which form almost all English-language movies were cast.

Though notionally about the working class, few films of the period bothered to show people actually at work. They showed them clocking off or enjoying a tea break (with expletives deleted) but seldom earning their living or (perhaps a more significant omission) withholding their labour. Perhaps this was because the men who made them were outsiders – educated middle-class left-wingers patronizing a romanticized proletariat. Is there not a hint of condescension in Lindsay Anderson's aspiration "to make people – ordinary people, not just top people – feel their dignity and their importance"? Meanwhile, in his film *O Dreamland* (1953) and in the pages of the magazine *Sequence*, he had berated popular culture and "the moronic mass audience". Working men and women, it seems, were noble to the extent that they espoused middle-class values.

British realist films of the 1950s and 60s also shied away from ascribing the problems they tackled – juvenile delinquency, racism and sexual intolerance – to deficiencies in society. In the pictures of the director Basil Dearden and the scriptwriter Ted Willis, in the film *O.E.R.* Braithwaite's novel *To Sir, With Love* (1966), the emphasis is firmly on the responsibility of the individual – success comes to the man or woman who works for it, even when the story undercuts the message.

Ironically, the films that most embodied a collective spirit and a challenge to the individual ethic were the hugely popular *Carry On* comedies. Popular culture, which Anderson despised, often conceals surprisingly radical sentiments, as John Hill skilfully points out. His book is an invaluable contribution to film history – tightly written, stimulating and supported by well-researched chapters on the social context and historical background of the

Polished performances

Michael Tanner

ALAN BLYTH (Editor)
Song on Record 1: Lieder
357pp. Cambridge University Press. £19.50.
0521 26844 3

The three volumes of *Opera on Record*, also edited by Alan Blyth, were the most dangerous kind of bedside reading; once begun, they gave the reader no rest until he had finished them, alternating his grunts of agreement with exclamations of anger at an injustice to a favourite artist, an inexplicable omission, or unworthily distributed praise. This volume does not compel in the same way, for obvious reasons, and indeed is best used as a reference work. Reading through large chunks of it at a time I grew confused, and found I couldn't remember any but the most startling judgments. It is none the less a valuable book, and one which any lover of the German art-song will frequently consult.

But how many lovers of Lieder are there? Records of Lieder seem to be the most ephemeral in the classical catalogue. Hence one source of vexation in reading this book: most of the performances referred to are not available, and may never have been except in highly specialized record shops. Of the thirty-one recordings of *Die Winterreise* listed (and further ones should have been) only twelve are available, some of the most desirable not being among them. Contributors write of superb records made in 1924 that have never been transferred to LP and are "extraordinarily hard to come by", or of which only two copies exist. It is certainly a virtue of the book, as of its predecessors on opera, that current availability is not taken account of, but it will lead to enormous frustration.

In his introduction, Blyth intimates (or "adumbrates", to use his own favourite word, whose meaning I'm not confident he grasps)

that the book will have a kind of plot: he claims that two schools of thought about Lieder singing emerge, one favouring what he, but no other contributor, terms "interventionist" interpretation, characteristic of post-Second World War singers, the other the more direct pre-war readings, and he parenthetically adds that "both styles certainly have their own validity". But in his chapter on *Die Schöne Müllerin* he confuses the distinction in expanding it: having mentioned five performances, he writes, "[they] represent the sharp contrast between what Eric Sams has termed 'contemplation or participation', between a simplistic or sophisticated reading, between description and intervention". None of these pairs of terms is equivalent to the others, hence it isn't clear that, as he immediately continues, "a middle way may be possible and valid", nor what that would amount to. The art of Lieder singing is necessarily sophisticated; the question is, rather, the degree to which the sophistication advertises itself in the performance, and thus to what extent the performance sounds spontaneous or studied, however much it may have been pondered. As Blyth correctly says of Lotte Lehmann's glorious and typical recording of the cycle, "My notes are filled with amazement at this or that astonishing detail... but it is the total understanding of the work's genius that demands attention." But is Lehmann "simplistic" or "sophisticated", "descriptive" or "interventionist"? Similar questions arise about Julius Patzak's great recording from 1943 (and they are both of course predominantly pre-war artists).

The pivotal point, inevitably, about which controversy rages, though less in the pages of this book than outside it, is the example and legacy of Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau. Not only has he recorded more Lieder than anyone else put together, but often the same ones three, four or even six times. Perhaps it is futile to argue about him further at this stage. He undoubtedly gives force to the term "interventionist".

In his introduction, Blyth intimates (or "adumbrates", to use his own favourite word, whose meaning I'm not confident he grasps)

Mastering the Musick

Curtis A. Price

ANDREW ASHBE
Records of English Court Music
Volume One: 1660-1685, revised edition
317pp. Ashbee, 214 Malling Road, Snodland, Kent ME6 5EQ. £12.95.
0950720720

King Charles II, though often impecunious, determined to have a musical establishment to rival the one which had entertained him during his exile in France. He reappointed most of the ageing musicians who had served his father and quickly swelled their numbers with foreign fiddlers, singers and composers, all of whose salaries were frequently in arrears. Soon after coming to the throne, Charles could enjoy, in addition to the Chapel Royal choir and his Private Musick of harps, lutes, viols and voices, the newly formed twenty-four Violins of the King, a wind consort, an Italian opera troupe and an annoying complement of trumpets and drums which accompanied him and other members of the royal family everywhere. While preferring foreign music, the king never neglected native talent and, sensing indignation in the ranks after appointing the proud Louis Grabu Master of the Musick, quietly replaced him with a nondescript Englishman, Nicholas Staggins.

This account is based on Henry Cart de Lafontaine's classic archival work *The King's Musick 1660-1700* (1909), compiled from the Lord Chamberlain papers in the Public Record Office. Without fully understanding the complex workings of the royal household, Lafontaine attempted to list in chronological order all the documents which mention music. This was hardly a case of Victorian scholarly plundering, but he did miss some references and conflated different kinds of records which he summarized or paraphrased to save space. So we must take our hats off to anyone with the perseverance to re-enter the notorious mare's nest of Charles II's reign. Andrew Ashbee's new project is to replace Lafontaine's

calendar with a more systematic compilation of court records which will eventually extend back to 1603 and forward through the reign of Queen Anne. In the present volume he carefully charts the tributaries and backwaters of the royal paper flow, splitting up the records accordingly. Many are transcribed complete for the first time, and some Lord Chamberlain papers not housed in the PRO are also listed. Perhaps the most significant improvement on Lafontaine is the inclusion of Debenature Books, whose receipts for lively allowances provide a large pool of musicians' signatures which will aid scholars studying contemporary music manuscripts.

Yet in his concern to reflect the organization of the seventeenth-century royal household, Ashbee has produced a reference work that is nearly as arcane. It must be used in conjunction with the editor's previously published lists of Exchequer and Treasury payments for the same reign (1981). (In the projected volume for 1685-1714, he wisely plans to include such payments in the main calendar; one also hopes for a classified index.) The present volume, like the one it intends to supersede, is selective: certain documents were judged to be "too ephemeral to warrant a place". After surveying endless pages of riding charges, warrants to apprehend persons for using foul and abusive language (a particular problem for trumpeters in the early 1660s) and the like, I began to wonder how the editor decided what was indeed too ephemeral.

Entries are keyed to *The King's Musick*, so one can easily see how much Lafontaine and his helpers overlooked. For all his dredging, Ashbee has turned up very little that is new: the transfer of foreign dancers to the Theatre Royal after the failure of the French opera *Ariane* in 1674, further details of Wren's modelling of the Whitehall Theatre in 1677 and numerous payments for trumpeters' mourning liveries are probably the most important items. This is not to disparage a highly accurate effort but rather to acknowledge Lafontaine's comprehensiveness. When Ashbee moves into the richer veins of the eighteenth century, we can expect more interesting discoveries.



Herman Prey as Giglio in Honegger's operetta *Roi Pausole*, a photograph in *First Night Fever: The Memoirs of Herman Prey* (288pp. Calder. £16.95. 0 7145 3998 8).

tionist", having taken it to be the case, at every stage of his career, that listeners will fail to grasp the import of what he is singing unless he pounces on one syllable, coos the next, pauses before blanching his tone for the one after that, and so on. The contributors disagree – sometimes with themselves – on whether he has done this more as his purely vocal resources have declined, or has simplified his style. It seems to me that he has varied his interpretations, but that the trade-marks have remained constant. At any rate, the contributors are united in near-adoration, and even his performances of the contralto songs of Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde*, which I would have thought were beyond any serious limits of taste, are praised by Andrew Clements. Occasionally he is rebuked for a fault which the unhappy few of us find ubiquitous, but only in contrast to the standards which he himself sets. John Steane, at the end of his consideration of ten songs of Schubert, is so beguiled by Fischer-Dieskau that he writes that "Volume 1 of Fischer-Dieskau's boxed-sets of Schubert Lieder contains 344 songs, the second even

more". That would indeed be remarkable, since according to John Reed in his authoritative *The Schubert Song Companion* the grand tally is 631. Steane has made the mistake of counting the list of titles and first lines helpfully provided by Deutsche Grammophon at the end of Volume One, which does indeed amount to 344, though the number of songs is 168. Even Fischer-Dieskau doesn't compose songs for Schubert – quite.

Fischer-Dieskau's female counterpart, Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, fares notably less well, and Michael Kennedy even finds her much-praised second recording of Strauss's *Vier letzte Lieder* "over-stylized, and therefore depriving the performance of a vital ingredient, spontaneity", while Robin Holloway is positively hilarious about her. But even he, by far the most eloquent writer in the book, is oddly schizoid: having said at the beginning of his chapter on Schubert's *Schwanengesang*, "I don't want to be an old fogey, but there is no doubt that, having dispatched the post-war recordings of the complete collection with only mild fluctuations between pleasure and boredom, the plunge into singers of an earlier epoch produced a greatly quickened response", he spends several pages on Fischer-Dieskau's various versions of the cycle, pages full of eulogistic expressions which consort strangely with "mild fluctuations between pleasure and boredom".

While many of the contributors have gone to great pains to listen to and list every recorded performance, including "private" and "pirate" ones, several have been less diligent – Jeremy Sams, for instance, on Schumann's *Frauentheben und -leben*, John Steane on Wagner's *Wesendonck Lieder*, and Andrew Clements on *Das Lied von der Erde*, the greatest performance of which, under Horenstein, he fails to mention. The volume, in fact, should have been longer: some chapters are painfully compressed; too few of Schubert's and Schumann's songs outside the cycles are discussed at all; and there should have been chapters on Pfitzner's songs and Hindemith's *Das Marienleben*. It is astonishing to find some notable singers not mentioned at all – Margarete Klose and Robert Holl, for example. And the proof-reading is outstandingly terrible: it is possible that Alfred Poell recorded Beethoven's "Adelaide" "in the manor of Schlusnus", but unlikely. None the less, this volume is indispensable for any lover of the Lied. Now on to chansons, canzone, pesni, songs, etc.

The quirky K

John Rosselli

EARL OF HAREWOOD (Editor)
Kobbé's Complete Opera Book
Tenth edition
1,404pp. Bodley Head. £30.
0370 310179

Since Wagner darkened the auditorium and stopped people following, libretto in hand, opera-goers have needed to do a bit of work beforehand if they are to get the most out of a performance. Kobbé's was only one of a number of guides published early this century: all assumed that what was needed was a synopsis of the libretto, pieced out with anecdotes, some general critical comments, and, for the better-known works, signposts to important arias or motifs, perhaps with a few music examples. This was apt so long as complete recordings of operas did not exist. What purpose such a compilation serves today is less clear. It is too bulky to take with you, yet individual entries are mostly too short to illuminate as do the essays of (say) E. J. Dent, Ernest Newman or Julian Budden; for reference purposes its performance histories are of necessity incomplete; its stress on the libretto may lend comfort to those producers who treat an opera as a play encumbered with music.

Why Kobbé has outlived the rest is somewhat clearer. His book was from the start centred on the Metropolitan Opera and its repertoire. Then he has been rescued for our own time by Lord Harewood, a man of finer as well as of more contemporary responses. Gustave Kobbé was a mediocre German-American

critic, fixed in the taste of about 1890. Wagner was God, Weber a mere forerunner, Verdi redeemed from "carelessness" only with *Aida*. Since Lord Harewood took over in 1954 from at least two earlier revisers he has written many new entries and sub-edited others. This tenth edition deals with over 300 operas; it is billed as "completely revised". Yet a good deal of "K" survives, Victorian journalists and all. Rigoletto is still "strangely affrighted"; at the end of *The Ring* "it is through woman that comes redemption". *Seniarnie* "seems to have had its day"; that is "K" looking back to what he saw as terminal performances by Patti. In 1890, but a footnote points us to recent revivals (and could have mentioned the Sutherland-Horne recording, still current). Now and then a ghostly time machine is at work, as when "K" (died 1918) refers to Francis Toye's book on Verdi (published 1931).

Endearing though it may be, that kind of thing looks quirky beside Lord Harewood's longer entries, especially those (on Janáček, say, or Prokofiev or Britten) in which a man of wide musical and theatrical experience pursues his own enthusiasms. If the excellent ten-page analysis of *The Turn of the Screw* contrasts with the half-page for *Erwartung*, that suggests that we could do with an all-Harewood volume, of fewer, longer essays, and let "K" and "completeness" go hang. Completeness is anyhow, as Lord Harewood acknowledges, relative. The latest choice, justifiably centred on the Coliseum repertoire, was bound to take in some ephemera but by and large reflects present-day taste. The one glaring omission, on the editor's own stated criteria, is not Cavalli or Rameau but *The Merry Widow*.

John Rosselli

The Grendel in us all

Alice H. G. Phillips

JOHN GARDNER
Stillness and Shadows
Edited by Nicholas Delbanco
432pp. Secker and Warburg. £12.95.
0436171534

When John Gardner died, aged forty-nine, in a motorcycle accident in 1982, he was regarded in America as a major novelist. He had behind him two collections of short stories and nine novels, including *Grendel* (1971), a *tour de force* narrated by the monster from *Beowulf*; *Nickel Mountain*, a small masterpiece of roadside-diner life in a realistic yet highly poetic vein, and *October Light* (1976), a baroque reflection on American culture and family dynamics. He also left parts of several books among his papers. *Stillness* was not one of them, while *Shadows* was the most significant. The latter, which Gardner had spoken of as a project for eight years and which he was working on at the time of his death, is a philosophical detective novel that ends, tantalizingly, half-way through. The first 100 pages were a clean copy; the next hundred were assembled by Gardner's literary executor, the novelist Nicholas Delbanco, from various versions in various states of despair: the final fifty were fragments. The completed novel here bound along with it, the autobiographical *Stillness*, was undertaken by Gardner as a kind of therapy, in collaboration with his first wife and a tape recorder, and written down hastily. Gardner salvaged two short stories from it and in 1975 gave to Delbanco what turned out to be the only copy, clearly stating that he did not intend to pursue it. In a publishing year that began with the

appearance of Nabokov's *The Invader*, it is not surprising that a literary executor, an agent and an editor should have packaged a highly interesting but incomplete novel with a bad but desperately confessional whole one, following the premature demise of their well-known author. How and when else would readers settle for just half of a mystery?

Stillness, as Gardner himself recognized, is an emotional outpouring rather than a novel; the calm pointed to by the title is a distant artistic dream. Its origins as therapy for Gardner and his wife are evident throughout: in the two main characters' self-lacerations and hysterical attacks on each other; in the unselective piling up of details, especially about ancestors and the couple's own younger days; and above all in the sloppily emotional, clichéd prose ("He was her past, her whole life, and if he left her, as again and again he threatened to do—even tried to do, running to some floozy . . . her whole life would be cancelled, made meaningless, would vanish in an instant without leaving a trace.") The book has almost no structure, shuttling between past and present, with nothing linked up. Its major theme—that Martin Ornick hates women because he fears them—only emerges towards the end, and its resolution by "sexual healing" is unconvincing (indeed, in real life John and Joan Gardner divorced not long after they finished the book). Delbanco admits in the introduction that Gardner abandoned the novel just when he would ordinarily have begun fleshing it out (Gardner habitually worked by addition rather than subtraction), but does not stop to think that he might have abandoned it because it was unworkable.

Shadows, on the other hand, might have been one of Gardner's strongest novels. The conventions of detective fiction helped him

control his tendency to rant, and the genre also sorted well with his existentialist mode. Then, too, he could play on its limitations, as he played with the limitations of junk fiction in *October Light* and *Freddy's Book* and with those of the saga in *Grendel*: his private eye is endowed with second sight and simultaneously afflicted with memory loss.

Forced by a shadowy scandal to close his big-time agency in Chicago, Detective Gerald Craine has come down in the world to semi-retirement in Carbondale, Illinois, where detection requires neither intelligence nor diligence. Craine is a solitary clown in false beard and ratty trenchcoat, a paid witness to the weary round of other people's infidelities and petty crimes. He is also a dead man walking around in a patchwork body, three times cut up and stitched together by cancer surgeons (Gardner had been there, too). These days, Craine stays perpetually drunk and suffers from severe amnesia. But as he says, "Only those who remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

Then the detective falls for one of his clients, Elaine Glass, a neurotic but strangely alluring student at the local university. She believes she knows who is responsible for a recent spate of

murders and fears she may be the next victim, and Craine, hopeless as he seems, is the best hope she has. Before Craine realizes it she has "switched on his denial-of-death machine", and he finds himself pulling heroics, thinking incisively and inexorably assembling his theory of the crimes. His researches lead him to the university computer centre, where the logical-analytical left hemisphere of the brain holds sway, and into his own and his suspects' right hemispheres, where poetry, intuition and emotions are born and bide their time.

There are many disparate strands to the book—feminism, parapsychology, computer sciences, linguistics—and the reader feels that Craine's bursts of returning memory were leading up to a shattering dénouement, as were his trusting-hostile relationship with Elaine and indeed the whole theme of male criminality directed against women. From the beginning of his career Gardner dealt with the problem of good and evil, with the monsters in all of us that have "the power to kill, given their bulk and mindlessness". As Craine remarks and Grendel knew, the world is a mystery we are locked up inside, with little time to get it right, and much both inside and outside ourselves which we must overcome.

Desirably complexed

Holly Eley

DOROTHY WEST
The Living Is Easy
362pp. Virago. Paperback, £3.95.
0860687538

The easy living in question remains tantalizingly out of reach for Cleo Judson, the protagonist of Dorothy West's first and, so far, only novel. Cleo's "charming insincerity", underlined by the desirably light colour of her skin, is her passport out of the South to the promised land of New England. Once there, her raids on what prove to be mirages of prosperity, social advancement and education for herself and her sisters, whom she has enticed north at the expense of their marriages, are wholly without scruple. She magnifies and builds on occasional success; if a lie does not convince it is quickly capped with another that is more fantastic; she is as oblivious to ostracism as she is to other people's *amour propre*.

The main theme of this fine, until recently forgotten, fiction (first published in 1948) is Cleo's attempt to establish herself in Boston and her uneasy marriage to an older man, Bart Judson, the "black banana king". Her Becky Sharp-ish machinations, though, even if always diverting, are, today, less gripping than West's evocation of a singular black middle-class society. This small group of negro Brahmins, businessmen and professionals, two or at most three generations from slavery, are squeezed between the fragile tolerance of their former white masters and the hordes of cotton pickers and house-nigras who stream daily into the slum of Boston's South End.

There is a society of manners—the right party, the Episcopalian rather than the Baptist church. Over-educated and over-sensitive, they cling to the only aspect of privilege not denied them. Without an economic or a political base every nuance of snobbery has, for them, a precise if hugely inflated value.

Although there is no narrator, it is the clear vision of the Judsons' dark-complexioned daughter Judy that informs the novel. The components of Cleo and Bart's marriage are power, dependency and despair. Cleo wants money that Bart cannot provide; Bart wants the warmth that Cleo reserves for her sisters and their children; what holds them together is their affection for their daughter. Out from this central relationship fan Cleo's manipulative liaisons—with Theo Binney, too refined to work and too poor not to, with Theo's brother Simon who tries, among the migrant poor from the South, to evade his destiny; and with the Duchess, former mistress of the Binneys' father who, at Cleo's behest, marries Simon in order to pay for Theo's life of idleness.

Just as manipulative is Cleo's treatment of her sisters and their children. At the end of the book, in her mansion in all-white Brookline (a

house that could barely be justified while Bart's business flourished) she still has them in tow. As she says goodbye to Bart, now bankrupt and on his way to New York to look for a manual job, it seems that, for the first time, she has begun to see him as a person rather than an object to exploit or possess. But selfishness remains her most vital strength; armed with it, it is clear that, even though she has failed to conquer and expand the milieu she has aspired to, she will survive the Depression, then prosper. The black Brahmins whose friendship she has coveted are unlikely to continue to exist.

West herself came from the kind of background she describes here. Then in the late 1920s, when barely sixteen, she began to publish stories under the auspices of a group of aspirant Afro-American authors, the Bostonian Saturday Evening Quill Club. The following year her story, "The Typewriter", won a prize in a national competition and she moved to New York where she was befriended by the New Negroes of the Harlem Renaissance. Closest to Countee Cullen, who found her "a fascinating and lovable child", she seems not to have been taken entirely seriously by these writers and artists. But later, in 1936, when the "niggerati" were no longer fashionable, she published their work in her excellent, short-lived literary journal, *Challenge*. A year after his demise, in 1938, it resurfaced as *New Challenge* with Richard Wright, Margaret Walker, Sterling Brown and Ralph Ellison among her co-editors. During this period many black intellectuals were intensely (and often highly ambivalently) involved with Communism. *New Challenge* seemed to some of West's colleagues to be a natural mouthpiece for the Left. West had enjoyed Muscovite hospitality (during the abortive Meschabpom "Black and White" film venture) as much as Langston Hughes, but her ideals remained as firmly capitalist as her family background. Rather than allow the Left to control her magazine she closed it down. She then moved to Martha's Vineyard and, when *The Living Is Easy* was published, achieved a considerable success at the time.

West uses the outsider's (Cleo's, Judy's) vantage point to good effect; her dialogue is also excellent. Some of her minor characters are peremptorily present, sometimes by a single attribute (gentle, smart, brilliant) or by skin-colour (golden, fair enough to pass as white, butter-coloured). And Cleo's small pieces remain, as perhaps they were intended to do, mere metaphors for her ambition. Because it is hard to distinguish one from another, their symbolic weight is minimal: their hapless mothers have far greater presence. The book's ending is bleak but one is left with the overwhelming impression that West's sensitive investigation of issues such as miscegenation, racial heritage and colour consciousness (and, low, fever, as it is called, here) is extremely relevant today.

The wayward girl's new departure

Patricia Craig

NADINE GORDIMER
A Sport of Nature
396pp. Cape. £10.95.
0241024477

A Sport of Nature is one of Nadine Gordimer's thoroughgoing, concentrated political novels, starting in South Africa but radiating outwards from this centre, based on a single character but gathering in many others along its animated course. We begin with a schoolgirl, Hillela Capran, slightly set apart from her companions but trusted by them nevertheless. One of the things that sets Hillela apart is her honorary orphanhood: mother absconded years earlier with a Portuguese dancing instructor, father a travelling salesman, a "rep", a person of no great consequence, always on the road. Hillela's upbringing falls to two Johannesburg aunts, her mother's sisters, one after the other: Olga, the rich one, dispatches her to Pauline, the energetic one, after some trouble at her Salisbury boarding-school, over Hillela's friendship with a coloured boy. She fits well into Pauline's household, forming an unspoken alliance with her cousins, a boy and a girl, getting on with Pauline's husband Joe, a political lawyer. In this house, in which black families are sometimes accommodated overnight, the way is open for Hillela to pick up a liberal, socialist outlook—however, at this stage in her life, in the late 1950s, she seems to get more of a kick out of go-go dancing.

Hillela is described, late in the novel, as "a past mistress of adaptation", her extraordinary progress put down, in part, to her skill at attaching herself to a particular kind of life, only to break away from it at a moment adjudged by her to be suitable. "Trust her", her critics remark: meaning, trust her to do all right for herself, to avoid the inauspicious move among the many possible moves in front of her. What she trusts is her instinct—for survival, aggrandizement or whatever. At seventeen Hillela cuts loose from her relations—having brought about a state of affairs in which they're

willing to let her go. They've served their turn. A journalist makes himself responsible for her sexual education, and for her transportation to another country after a police raid on their home—a put-up job, as it turns out. He's a double-dealer, a worker for the Pan Africanist Congress. But no matter—he represents a necessary stage in Hillela's life. After being jettisoned by him, she turns up on a beach in Dar es Salaam, among a lot of other political refugees, her possessions the clothes she has on and the safety-pin that holds them in place. Beach girl: it's a colourful, and a temporary, incarnation.

This is a forward-looking, not an inward-looking, novel. Hillela is kept at a certain distance from the reader, and indeed disappears altogether from time to time. "Where", we are asked, "was the seventeen-year-old on the Day of the Covenant . . . when bombs exploded in a post office, the Resettlement Board headquarters and the Bantu Affairs Commissioner's offices?" No one can say for sure, not even Hillela herself. When she fades out of the picture, historical events crowd in—Congress of Democrats, Sabotage Act. A device is used (though not consistently) in relating Hillela's story, to gain a quasi-documentary effect: it is as if the biographer of a distinguished woman were building up the framework of her life, relying on the recollections of others, acknowledging gaps and resorting to speculation. "Some people claim to remember that particular young woman with her black baby", we are told; perhaps confusing Hillela with someone quite different. The baby, though, she's part of the story, the daughter of a black South African revolutionary, an ANC man, whom Hillela has married (after a liaison with a diplomat) only to lose to assassins, government agents.

The story goes on: more lovers, in different settings—Eastern Europe, England, America. Here is Hillela as a fund-raiser for the African National Congress, a platform speaker, relief worker dispensing soup to refugees. Repetition is the technique Gordimer adopts to fix a pungent image of Hillela, at successive stages, in the reader's mind. The safety-pin marks her time on the beach; soup powder denotes her

"aid and research" activities in stricken parts of Africa. The author doesn't minimize the part played by uncalculating eroticism in Hillela's odyssey (uncalculating, and therefore unimpeachable, on a par with the absence of ill-will in her abandonment of benefactors). In this respect, as in others, she is simply following her nose. Over and above this sexual quality, however, is a more durable ideal of comradeship, symbolized by the handclasp between Hillela and her first husband after he's taken her into his confidence over political matters.

Mutability, you could say, is her dominant trait. Her conduct of her life shows a considerable advance on the decent, limited liberalism of her Aunt Pauline's home. Insufficient egalitarianism is something the author is adept at detecting, and condemning. A recurrent concern of her novels is the way in which personal relations are complicated, or distorted by political realities, of which the most striking is the reality of apartheid. There is also the dilemma confronting those (white) who devote their lives to people who have no time for them (black)—and the need to understand that there is more to this issue than a simple matter of ingratitude. At a crucial moment in *Burger's Daughter*, for example, a black boy who once shared Rosa Burger's enlightened South Afri-

can home disclaims her and her family and all their efforts on behalf of the black population: "Killed in prison. It's nothing. I know plenty blacks like Burger. It's nothing, it's us, we must be used to it . . .".

Burger's Daughter, which opens with the schoolgirl Rosa outside a prison waiting to visit her mother, and ends with Rosa herself as a political detainee, is in many ways a stronger and more implacable work than *A Sport of Nature* (impressive though the latter is). The difference is one of tone—hopeful, now, instead of disabused. The new book imagines, in its triumphal ending, a black African state in the place of South Africa, with Hillela and her second husband, a revolutionary general and reinstated president, standing for the wished-for integration within it. (It's a sunnier eventuality, too, than the black uprising postulated in *July's People*, with white South Africans not showing at all well in the altered conditions.) Hillela, the "sport of nature"—defined as something that "departs from the parent stock or type"—with her independence of spirit and her indifference to the past, represents a new departure, an access for social justice. The novel, however, is most evocative and most satisfying in its early stages: the schools, the white suburbs, the partial political agitation, the wayward girl.

Flavours of the veld

Christopher Hope

CHARLES MUNGOSHI
The Settling Sun and the Rolling World:
Selected stories
202pp. Heinemann. £10.95.
0434481661
MENAN DU PLESSIS
A State of Fear
190pp. Pandora. £9.95 (paperback, £3.95).
0863381676
ANN OOSTHUIZEN (Editor)
Sometimes When It Rains: Writings by South African women
184pp. Pandora. £9.95 (paperback, £3.95).
0863381072

In Charles Mungoshi, Zimbabwe has a writer of exceptional gifts, already known in his own country as a poet and the author of several novels in Shona, the language of the majority of Zimbabweans. *The Settling Sun* and *The Rolling World* makes available for the first time Mungoshi's English stories. His special interest is in exploring the relations between different generations; more specifically, the tensions between fathers and sons—though this is extended into sensitive studies of the equally strong, compensating alliances between child and grandparent. In "Shadows on the Wall" a boy learns to take pity on the father he hates for driving away his mother, even though he cannot bring himself to talk to him. In "Who Will Stop the Dark?" the son of a crippled father and a resentful, jealous mother turns to his grandfather, who teaches him to fish and hunt and comes to stand in the boy's mind as a symbol of freedom, even though the old man knows, and the boy will discover to his cost, that authority is not so easily escaped.

Mungoshi writes out of the deeply rural heartland of Zimbabwe, and it is his capacity to convey the sights, scents and seasons of the bush that gives his stories a confident, natural tone so rare among writers in English in the southern subcontinent. He has a countryman's love for the flavours of the veld and a naturalist's eye for the shifting blues of the summer sky, the habits of nesting river-birds and the oppressive pre-dawn heat of October mornings. In Mungoshi's stories the remote villages rooted in the land and the steady traditions of the countryside represent a form of innocence to which children are particularly responsive—though it offers them no protection from the violence of family, friends and the wider world. In the title story, a father pleads with his son to stay in the village and to respect "the way of the land, the way of the family". But of course Mungoshi knows that the land is often poor, that the big city beckons and children grow up. In "The Brother" a boy's dreams of excitement in the city are cruelly dashed when a brother proves to be a drunken tyrant and city life a

hopeless sham. These gentle, elegiac stories are a continual delight, and a notable début.

Although Mungoshi is not shy about touching on racial politics, his work has a pacific quality which is extraordinary in someone from a country which has endured a long and bloody civil war. Certainly, to a South African writer his assurance and the broad sweep of his subject matter would seem enviable, though of course quite out of the question down south where the stain of apartheid touches everything. In her first novel, *A State of Fear*, it is clear that Menan du Plessis has an eye almost as sharp as Mungoshi's—in her case for the countryside of the Cape. But her subject matter of necessity includes bus boycotts, riots and police action. These are large issues to run into head-on, and the brooding unease with which the liberal conscience faces them seldom makes for subtle or convincing fiction. Oddly enough, it is when du Plessis turns her attention to what one might call the grass in the tank-tracks, small ordinary everyday things such as food and friendships, that she reveals herself to be a vivid and original writer.

Du Plessis is also represented in *Sometimes When It Rains*: by an extract from her latest novel in which, regrettably, she seems to have discarded everyday life and writes almost entirely in the language of the political rally. This collection of writings by South African women also includes stories by Nadine Gordimer and Bessie Head. It is interesting that the strongest contributions are from women who have most to endure under the present system. There is about Miriam Tlali's piece on the life of an office cleaner, and the estimable Ellen Kuzwayo's fighting talk on feeding schemes, a confidence and self-reliance which the white contributors with their expressions of guilt and remorse seem unable to match.

Scottish Arts Council

The Literature Committee will consider applications for

Travel and Research Grants

In late May 1987 from professional writers of fiction, verse, and literary non-fiction, who are resident in Scotland.

Closing date for applications: 1 May 1987
Further information and application forms are available from:

Literature Director
Scottish Arts Council
19 Charlotte Square
Edinburgh EH2 4DF
Tel: 031 228 6051

Criminal proceedings

T. J. Binyon

TED WOOD
Foot's Gold
207pp. Collins. £8.95.
000230797

As a favour for a friend of his ex-wife Canadian policeman Reid Bennett takes his black Alsatian Sam and heads north to look into the death of geologist Jim Prudhomme, found with his head gnawed off by a bear in the bush outside Olympia, where a gold strike has created a new Klondike. Solid story with a neat ending, unobtrusive love interest, and plenty of action for Reid and Sam: certainly up to the standard of Ted Wood's three earlier Reid Bennett books.

DAVID WILLIAMS
Treasure in Roubles
197pp. Macmillan. £8.50.
0333423100

Merchant banker Mark Treasure is persuaded by his actress wife Molly to accompany her on a cultural jaunt to Leningrad—where he becomes embroiled in an attempt to steal a painting from the Hermitage, solves the murder of one of the four party (knifed during the interval of Boris Godunov), and—saves the face of an amphibious Colonel Grinyev of the KGB. Treasure is always good value, and this is a pleasing story—perhaps not as richly textured as the author's last—onacted against a well-caught background of Leningrad in winter.

LAWRENCE BLOCK
When the Sacred Ghazal Closes
299pp. Macmillan. £8.95.
0333423100

Eight years back, and Matt Scudder; once of the NYPD, now a licensed private eye, but a man who does favours for his friends for a

COLIN DEXTER
The Secret of Annexe 3
218pp. Macmillan. £8.95.
0333431391

The Haworth Hotel, somewhere up the Banbury Road in North Oxford, has advertised what it calls a winter break bargain holiday, the climax of which was to have been the grand fancy-dress dinner party on New Year's Eve, but which in fact turns out to be the discovery of a body in Room Three of the hotel annexe on New Year's Day. Chief Inspector Morse, assisted by Sergeant Lewis, and sustained by a gallon or two of beer, investigates. Nice observation of contemporary *mores*, and a plot of classical cunning and intricacy: though the central gimmick on which the intrigue depends is a trifle frail and unconvincing.

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Sales of books

H. R. Woudhuysen

Sotheby's first major book auction of this year takes place on April 23 and 24. While it is mainly strong in colour-plate and illustrated books some of the early travel items are rare and unusual. The colour plate books include one outstanding lot, which is briefly described as "Gould's Gould". This is the set of his own folio works which the nineteenth-century ornithologist and artist John Gould kept for himself. The thirteen works issued between 1831 and 1888 contain 3,265 hand-coloured lithographic plates and, as well as being bound in contemporary green morocco, are collected in a specially-made walnut cabinet which also has a hinged bookrest and four glazed doors. The collection makes rather an attractive piece of furniture and is estimated to sell for between £350,000 and £400,000. It has been kept together by the descendants of Gould's family for over a century and may remain unbroken as long as someone can afford to pay this sort of price for the lot; if nobody can, then the books will be sold separately in sixteen lots.

Among the other items of interest in the sale

is a very rare copy of Francis Cawood's work on establishing correct longitudes, *Navigation Completed*, 1710. Cawood's researches were examined by Newton and Halley at the request of the Treasury, but although his book on the subject was registered with the Stationers' Company no copy of it was known to E. G. R. Taylor, the best writer on early English navigation, none appears ever to have been sold at auction and there is no copy of it in the British Library; Sotheby's expect this small quarto book in contemporary panelled sheep to fetch £500-£700. Another uncommon work not in the British Library is M. E. William's *My Cruise in the "Red Rose"*, printed locally at Rugby in 1876. The book is made up of just under a hundred photographs of the Middle East and Greece, in an era before tourism reached these places; the volume, which comes complete with its own brass lock, is estimated at £400-£500. An even rarer volume in the sale contains parliamentary printings of draft treaties recognizing the independence of the United States and ending the hostilities between Britain and France and Spain. These five items appear to have been specially printed in advance of the debate on them on

February 17, 1783, for circulation among ministers and Members of Parliament: the copies which Sotheby's are selling, and which they expect to go for as much as £3,000, belonged to Charles Morgan, MP for Brecon, and they were almost certainly given to him by his father, who represented the same constituency in Parliament at the time of the treaties.

Three cartographic items in the same sale are particularly fine. A copy of Saxton's English Atlas of 1579, in a very early binding, with thirty-four of the thirty-five double-page maps coloured in a contemporary hand and with a good early provenance is estimated at £40,000-£45,000. The signature of the greatest geographer of the sixteenth century, Abraham Ortelius, appears with his "et amicum" inscription in a remarkable copy of the Lyons and Vienna edition of Ptolemy's *Geographiae enarrationis libri octo* of 1541. Given Ortelius's great importance and influence it may seem strange that no comprehensive study of his library has ever appeared; many of the books he owned are in this country (which he visited), and this volume has several leaves of its text and some of its maps annotated by him.

Ptolemy's work must have interested Ortelius a great deal: if the annotations could be dated it would be possible to establish when he acquired the work and what part it played in his own researches. It is expected to go for £16,000-£18,000. Finally, a set of fifty-two playing cards by Robert Morden produced in 1676, each with the tiny engraved map of a county of England or Wales is estimated at £1,500-£2,000. As well as the great rarity of these cards, which have hand-stencilled suit marks, they are particularly sought-after because some of them bear the earliest separately printed county maps to show any roads.

On March 26 both Phillips and Bloomsbury Book Auctions held sales. Bloomsbury's sale was mixed with only a few surprising results. Chief among these was the £4,800 which Quaritch paid for Trollope's annotated set of the *Bibliothèque Latine-Française* issued at Paris between 1825 and 1838 in 177 volumes. These were not in very good condition, with a certain amount of damp-staining and some covers missing, but Trollope had evidently used these parallel texts, particularly for his work on Cicero and Caesar, and the auc-

tioners' estimate of £100-£150 seriously undervalued the amount of interest that anything to do with Trollope's extraordinary literary career can arouse. There was, similarly, a great deal of excitement, generating many bids, for a copy of Sir John Soane's *Plans, Elevations and Sections of Buildings Executed in the Counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, ... etc.* in its large paper issue with forty-seven engraved plates of 1788 - the year of his appointment as architect to the Bank of England. Soane has once again come to be seen as a fashionable and important architect whose work is rightly much admired; this copy of his own record of his early work went for £750.

Phillips' sale on the same day attracted a great deal of much more specialized interest, for they were selling the privately collected chess library of Michael Macdonald Rnz. Chess books have always attracted enthusiasm because of the game's long history and extensive literature and Phillips' sale was remarkably successful, making a total of about £55,500 with only three out of 525 lots unsold. The sale included chess sets and prints, but mainly consisted of books and journals which attracted much attention from private collectors, principally from America, Germany and Australia. On the whole prices were fairly moderate, with few going above their pre-sale estimates. Four that did particularly well were all comparatively early printed books. The first original chess work in English, Joseph Berni's *The Noble Game of Chess*, 1735, estimated at £350-£450, was bought by Kaminski for £700. A private American collector, de Lucia, who bought some of the best lots in the sale, paid £1,300 for the fifth edition of "the first book dealing with the whole of the game and the first book giving directions for playing without seeing the board", Damiano da Odemira's *Libro da Imparare Giochare a Scachi* of about 1525 (estimate £600-£800); he also bought another early Italian book on the game by Horatio Gianutio published at Turin in 1597 for £2,000 (estimate £1,100-£1,500), and the first English edition of Philidor's classic *Chess Analysed*, 1750 ("his insight into the importance of pawn play is fundamental to the modern game"), for £980 (estimate £200-£250). None of these prices includes the buyer's premium.

AUTHOR, AUTHOR

Competition No 325
Readers are invited to identify the sources of the three quotations which follow and to send us the answers so that they reach this office not later than May 8. A prize of £20 is offered for the first correct set of answers opened on that date, or failing that the most nearly correct - in which case inspired guesswork will also be taken into consideration.

Entries, marked "Author, Author 325" on the envelope, should be addressed to the Editor, *The Times Literary Supplement*, Priory House, St John's Lane, London EC1M 4BX. The solution and results will appear on May 15.

1 You thought I had the strength of men,
Because with men I dared to speak,
And coursed science now and then,
And studied Latin for a week;

But woman's woman, even when
She reads her Ethics in the Greek.

2 She talks BEETHOVEN; frowns disapprobably
At BALZAC's name; sighs it at "poor GEORGE SANDS";

Knows that she has exceeding pretty hands;
Speaks Latin with a right accentuation;
And gives it need (as one who understands)
Draft, counsel, diagnosis, exhortation.

3 Some have known a likely lad
That had a sound fly-fisher's wrist
Turn to a drunken journalist;
A girl that knew all Dante once
Live to bear children to a dunce.

Competition No 321
Winner: Melissa Hamilton
Answers:

1 I saw you once, boatman, lean by your pole

On an Oxford river, in the dubious light
Between willow and water.
U. A. Fanthorpe, "At the Ferry".

2 This is the one song everyone
would like to learn: the song that is irresistible

the song that forces men
to leap overboard in squadrons
even though they see the beached skulls.
Margaret Atwood, "Siren Song".

3 Now pass I to the final river
Ignominiously, in a sack, without sound,
As one peeping Turk to the Bosphorus.
T. E. Hulme, "Conversion".

Yesterday the balloons went up to launch the British Library's "Adopt a Book and Save the Nation's Literary Heritage" campaign - with a prize for the child whose balloon went furthest. This scheme aims to attract sponsorship for the 2 million books in the British Library in need of repair. Those who wish to make contributions should contact the National Preservation Office, The British Library, Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3DU.

Letters

South Africa

Sir, - In his review of my book *Black and Gold* (April 3) Simon Jenkins reassesses his familiar arguments that sanctions against South Africa are counter-productive and hurt blacks much more than whites. Foreign pressure, he tells us, "destroys hope and boosts white morale".

If that is so, then why have the minimal sanctions of last autumn been followed by the biggest split in the white laager since the Afrikaner Nationalist Party came to power forty years ago?

In the coming general election the defecting Nationalists are led by the former ambassador to London, Denis Worrall, whose financial supporters are just those interests that are most hit by sanctions - including the Cape wine-growers and fruit-farmers, who are desperate to sell more to Western markets, and the international tobacco tycoon Anton Rupert, who controls Rothmans in Britain.

Can Mr Jenkins really believe that these interests would have challenged the ruling party if they had not been threatened by foreign pressure and sanctions?

Jenkins insists that the influence of the rand crisis in 1985 on President Botha was a three-day wonder, and argues that it postponed rather than advanced apartheid reform. Yet Botha's "Rubicon 2" speech in January 1986 was quite clearly designed to reassure the bankers with its promises to dismantle apartheid. The fact that he broke those promises was an important reason for Nationalists, including Worrall, to defect and campaign for more rapid reforms.

All through his argument Jenkins seems to identify Botha with white opinion in general; while the current political scene shows clearly that key sectors within Afrikanerdom, including business men, theologians and intellectuals, are refusing to follow Botha into his laager - which is just what the supporters of sanctions hoped for.

ANTHONY SAMPSON,
21 Ladbroke Grove, London W11.

The Emperor

Sir, - I agree with Michael Gilson that the stage adaptation of Ryszard Kapuściński's book *The Emperor* is "excellent" (Commentary, March 27). The play follows the original text faithfully, and achieves a considerable measure of dramatic tension. However, since the staged version reflects a book which purports to be factual, and has been given a Library of Congress classification for both "History, sources" and "Biography", it may not be inappropriate to raise the question of Kapuściński's value as a source on Ethiopian history.

Kapuściński claims that his book is based on secret interviews with former courtiers, and that he "visited them after dark" and "had to change cars and disguises". He then proceeds with a series of statements mainly about the court, which, readers are supposed to assume, he collected from courtiers whom he refers to by initials. The identities of these men - no less than thirty-four in number - are, however, so completely concealed that they remain to all intents and purposes anonymous. There is therefore no way of evaluating, let alone checking, the authenticity of the passages attributed to them. No information is afforded as to when or in what language these interviews took place, though we are led to believe that one at least was conducted in English not earlier than 1976, for we read, on page 50, that an interviewee read out passages from Edward Ullendorff's "London edition" of the Emperor's autobiography *My Life and Ethiopia's Progress*, which was not published until the spring of that year. Irrespective of the language employed by the informants, the titles supposedly used by them in referring to the Emperor are linguistically implausible. Ethiopian courtiers who referred to him by several set formulae, such as *Jan Hoy*, His Imperial Majesty, etc., would never have made use of the many and varied epithets quoted by Kapuściński, such as His Most Virtuous Highness, His Magnanimous Highness, His Most Sublime Majesty, His Most Extraordinary

Highness, etc. In fact, I have long been an advocate of an anthropology that is both humanistic and scientific and have been an

Emperor never signed anything in his own hand... not even those closest to him knew what his signature looked like" - a statement repeated in the play. The present writer, though not close to the Palace, has seen numerous examples of this signature, and, as Director of the Institute of Ethiopian Studies, carried a letter bearing one to the Second International Conference of Ethiopian Studies, held at the University of Manchester in 1963, inviting the ensuing conference to Addis Ababa. One is tempted to wonder whether this is a case of Kapuściński's informants taking him for a ride, or of him taking his readers for one.

No less surprising is Kapuściński's statement that the Emperor was so suspicious of one of his courtiers, Endelkachew Makonnen, that immediately prior to the abortive coup of 1960 he "added Endelkachew to the travelling party so that he could keep an eye on him during the visit to Brazil". Endelkachew, as readers in Britain may remember, was then the Ethiopian Ambassador to the Court of St James's. He remained at this post throughout the coup, and never had anything to do with the Emperor's journey to or from Brazil.

Kapuściński's uncritical acceptance of his alleged informants' statements can also be seen in the statement that Haile Selassie was responsible for the introduction of motor cars and the postage service to the country. Both were introduced during the reign of the previous emperor, Menelik. (On the story of the first car to reach Addis Ababa in 1907, see T. R. Nicholson's fascinating book *A Toy for the Lion*, 1965.)

I do not wish by these comments to deny the validity of either investigative journalism or works of imagination based on history, but a good journalist, let alone a good historian, should avoid such verifiable mistakes.

RICHARD PANKHURST,
22 Lawn Road, London NW3.

'Writing Culture'

Sir, - The assertions of James Clifford cited by Nigel Barley in his review of *Writing Culture* (February 27) are prime examples of the obscurantism that is abroad in contemporary American cultural anthropology. The account that Clifford gives of the Mead-Freeman controversy is both wildly inaccurate and completely spurious.

In fact, having been sent to Samoa in 1928 by Franz Boas to secure a scientific answer to the question, "Are the disturbances which vex our adolescents due to the nature of adolescence itself or to the civilization?" Margaret Mead came to the unambiguous conclusion, fully in accord with the then ruling ideology of American cultural anthropology, that "we cannot make any explanations" of the "disturbances" of adolescence other than "in terms of the 'social environment'". This unqualified environmentalist dogma, which gets a fundamentalist matter fundamentally wrong, was repeated in millions of copies of *Coming of Age in Samoa*, as well as in an unbroken succession of anthropological textbooks, and given very widespread professional and popular credence.

Today, however, as Stephen Jay Gould has put it, "every scientist, indeed every intelligent person, knows that human social behaviour is a complex mix of biological and social influences", which means that Mead's sixty-year-old conclusion is conspicuously at odds with contemporary scientific knowledge, and so quite obsolescent.

In 1983, in my book *Margaret Mead and Samoa: The making and unmaking of an anthropological myth*, by adducing a wide range of empirical evidence, including evidence recorded by Mead herself, I presented a systematic refutation of the depictions of Samoa on which Mead based her demonstrably unscientific conclusion, and argued for an anthropology based on an explicitly interactionist paradigm in accord with well-tested scientific findings.

Clifford's disparaging description of this refutation as "scientism inspired by recent developments in sociology" is wholly without foundation. In fact, I have long been an advocate of an anthropology that is both humanistic and scientific and have been an

outspoken critic of sociobiology, as it was formulated in 1975, as, for example, in my essay in *Sociobiology Examined* (1980).

A "researcher" of the news magazine *Time* who fails to check his facts is liable to be issued with an "Error Report", which is regarded as a "professional disgrace". What, then, is one to say of a Harvard-trained academic who, totally failing to check vitally significant facts, incorporates flagrant errors in the findings of a School of American Research Advanced Seminar published by a university press?

DEREK FREEMAN,
Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University, Canberra.

Russian Art

Sir, - History like Beauty, it would appear, ends up in the eye of the beholder. Norbert Lynton completely misses the point when he describes (March 27) my book *New Worlds: Russian art and society 1900-1937* as "an attempt" at a "general account of Russian Modernism". This was never my intention, and the critique he makes is based on the serious misapprehension that it was.

True, Modernism figures - sandwiched between the earnest moralizing of the *Peredvizhniki* and the intractable demands of Zhdanov. But even during that relatively brief interlude Modernism was not the only option for an artist and this is made abundantly clear.

The subject of the book is described in the conscious irony of its title: the widespread hunger throughout society for the destruction of the old and the building of the new. This was not simply a three-cornered battle between "Modernists", "Reactionaries" and "Revolutionaries"; many different new worlds were imagined and fought for by artists, writers, musicians, philosophers, architects and politicians of widely divergent beliefs. I have "attempted" to examine these as the basis of a cultural and visual history which places Modernism within a wider context and which does not hold party with any one tendency.

Only on one level can this narrative be seen as an "inevitable" conflict between the free-ranging creativity and idealism of the Modernists and the authoritarianism of state-controlled culture under Stalin. Many good avant-garde artists censored themselves into compliance. The tragedy was that a civilized *modus vivendi* proved impossible for many reasons.

There may be some parallels with the present in this, which Norbert Lynton fails to see: not least in the sense of spiritual demoralization which pervades culture if government fails to value adequately the contributions and criticisms of its intelligentsia and the creative work of its artists.

DAVID ELLIOTT,
Museum of Modern Art, Oxford.

The Amicable Grant

Sir, - As one of the dedicatees of C. W. Bernard's study of the Amicable Grant, *War Taxation and Rebellion*, I feel that I must point out that in his review of it (March 6) David Starkey made at least two accusations which do not stand up to even a cursory scrutiny. Far from passing over in silence the request of the dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk for a royal council, Dr Bernard not only quotes it verbatim but devotes a page and a half of comment to it (p 84 f). As for the charge that he failed to appreciate the challenge to his view of the Amicable Grant posed by the work of the contemporary historian, Edward Hall, this too is nonsense, because the first three-and-a-half pages of the final chapter are devoted explicitly to this matter.

The insufficiencies of your reviewer's treatment of the facts hardly lend much credence to his rather sneering conclusions, and indeed no such credence should be given. Dr Bernard's work is a splendid study of a very intriguing episode, the main feature of which is his willingness to engage with all the ambiguities and complexities of the evidence. As such, it will command the respect and attention of all those interested in Tudor history for a very long time indeed.

OWEN HOBBSBAUM,
Owl House, Westerham, Kent.

The 'South Bank Show' and V.S. Naipaul

Sir, - It is sad to see Gavin Scott's letter (April 3) falling so far short of the real argument about books and television.

He has either misread my brief note or he does not understand it.

I made a clear and precise distinction between the "packaging" of the programme (about 5 per cent) and the content of the interview/profile proper. So did your perceptive television reviewer David Nokes.

I find it distressing that after much (not enough, of course) good work has been done on television about authors, such lazy, unthoughtful and - as far as I can tell - un-researched opinions should still find space.

Let Mr Scott analyse what Naipaul said. Let him analyse what Hilary Chadwick, the Producer/Director, did. Let him look at what the interview I conducted brought out and let him, above all, treat it as an interview and not as the book itself. And then perhaps he will offer an opinion which can be taken seriously in a journal such as yours.

MELVYN BRAGG,
London Weekend Television, Kent House, Upper Ground, London SE1.

Academic Journals

Sir, - A major publisher of scientific journals, Institute of Physics Publishers Ltd, plans to lobby authors of papers appearing in its journals, asking them to ensure that the main (and possibly departmental) library of their university does not cancel particular journals when subscription renewals fall due in the summer.

The background to this is that British universities have for several years been obliged to cancel journal subscriptions, partly because of funding cuts, but even more because of the increasing cost of academic journals. (Since 1980, science journals have inflated in price several times faster than the Retail Price Index.) These cuts have now become an annual event, amounting, in science, to about 10 per cent per annum. Despite this annual pruning, journal costs in several science subjects escalate to absorb practically the entire budget for journals and books together. In consequence, the small amount left for book purchases in these subjects has been spent in only half the year.

My message to academic journal publishers is this. Academics count journals and books among their most indispensable resources. Groups and departments are already defending the journals essential to themselves as vigorously as they can. Lobbying from publishers would only be a nuisance to us, and would do the publishers no good. A constructive move by publishers would be to lower their prices, or at least the inflation rate. If they are unwilling or unable to do that, publishers should direct their lobbying at the Department of Education and Science, pointing out the knock-on effect of the higher-education funding cuts on publishers.

A. A. COTTEY,
School of Mathematics and Physics, University of East Anglia, Norwich.

A Martin Bell Memorial

Sir, - The undersigned were friends and admirers of the poet Martin Bell who died in 1978. We propose to start a society for the purpose of encouraging interest in Martin's work and promulgating interest in the areas with which he was particularly concerned, especially the study of poetry and the translation of poetry. To that end, we propose to start a magazine to come out annually, to hold occasional recitals and meetings and to sponsor an annual Martin Bell Lecture. Anyone who would like to take part in this venture should write to Philip Hobbsbaum at the address given below.

PHILIP HOBBSBAUM,
JOHN MILNE,
PETER PORTER,
PETER REDGROVE,
c/o Department of English Literature, University of Glasgow, Glasgow G12 8QQ.

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PIRANDELLO'S
"BLAZING MASTERPIECE" (S Times)

SIX CHARACTERS IN SEARCH OF AN AUTHOR

in a new version by Nicholas Wright

"Revolutionary... NOT TO BE MISSED" (The)

the song that forces men
to leap overboard in squadrons
even though they see the beached skulls.
Margaret Atwood, "Siren Song".

3 Now pass I to the final river
Ignominiously, in a sack, without sound,
As one peeping Turk to the Bosphorus.
T. E. Hulme, "Conversion".

Yesterday the balloons went up to launch the British Library's "Adopt a Book and Save the Nation's Literary Heritage" campaign - with a prize for the child whose balloon went furthest. This scheme aims to attract sponsorship for the 2 million books in the British Library in need of repair. Those who wish to make contributions should contact the National Preservation Office, The British Library, Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3DU.

COMMENTARY

Wittier than thou

J. K. L. Walker

PETER NICHOLS
A Piece of My Mind
Apollo Theatre

In 1982 Peter Nichols retired to Shropshire to write a novel and here it is, transmuted into a play and staged in London on April Fools Day — "a jeu d'esprit, a promissory note, a piece of his mind". It is about a playwright, Ted Forrest (George Cole), who with his family retires to Herefordshire to write an autobiographical novel but fails and turns it into a play about his failure. The result is a bitter, intelligent comedy which, in its attempt to transfer to the stage the multiple authorial ironies of modern fiction, to wheedle or assault the audience out of its naive trust in the author, leaves Pirandello puffing far behind.

The audience at the Apollo seemed unready to slip the guiding hand, even when sharply reminded of its diminished role by the bleating of sheep relayed through the auditorium. On the face of it, Nichols seems to be treating the paying guests as not particularly bright eavesdroppers on the torments of the creative process. At another level, Forrest/Nichols professes to remain in the grip of the "tyranny of form" and is playing the paradox for its entertainment value.

Nichols has, in any case, let it be known that he considers *A Piece of My Mind* to be about other things besides the processes of writing, notably the theme of envy among writers. Abstracting this from the magician's cabinet of the play calls for concentration. The tyranny of form gives us a roughly chronological account of Forrest's career as a playwright, presented as scenes representing chapters from the work in progress: the poverty-stricken beginnings in a two-room flat up sixty-eight stairs; humiliations at the hands of producer and agent — in the early 1960s, comments Forrest, "we all lived . . . by writing propaganda for swinging

Britain"; success and a degree of celebrity with a film about a pop-group, Jack Straw and the Rebels. All this is cut into and undercut by fantasies engendered, as Forrest's wife Dinah (Anna Carteret) duly observes, by lust, jealousy and envy: envy of Forrest's younger and more successful rival Miles Whittier, whose plays the *lumpen* Forrest children prefer to those of their father because they are better. At intervals this glamorous spotlit superstar bursts on stage, ejected from poor Forrest's cardiganed paranoia, to the triumphant blare of the Coronation Anthem.

There are private and not very important games going on here which have to do with Nichols's own relationships with Tom Stoppard and Charles Wood: Wood's television series, *Don't Forget to Write*, was about the travails of a writer (also played by George Cole) envious of a more successful colleague, said to have affinities with Nichols. This would be cloying were it not that Whittier may be seen equally as a symbol of the writer's frustrated perfectionism as of actual rivalry; a function that may be shared by the critic from the "By Jove" press (Jerome Willis), whose appearances, too, punctuate the play. "One can't help feeling that an actor as accomplished as Jerome Willis is wasted in the part of the critic", this person confides to the audience, when Forrest's back is turned.

Peter Nichols weaves the strands of this breathtaking counterpoint with skill and effrontery, to which the cast of five, playing between them nineteen characters, respond nimbly, with only the occasional grumble about being allowed insufficient time for costume changes. As Ted Forrest, George Cole anchors the play with his portrayal of a troubled, self-questioning man, whose outward simplicity and seriousness offer an effective contrast to the fireworks he is superintending, and lead one to wonder naively whether in fact Nichols didn't have rather a tough time of it in Shropshire. Well, the dog will in the end round up the sheep, especially perhaps a dog running interestingly backwards in circles.

Lovers and shadow-lovers

Victoria Glendinning

ELIZABETH BOWEN
The Heat of the Day
Adapted by Felicity Browne and Giles Havergal
Donmar Warehouse

Shared Experience's stage version of *The Heat of the Day*, Elizabeth Bowen's classic novel of the Second World War, is astonishingly successful. Bowen's fiction is hard to dramatize because its impact is a matter of atmosphere, and the crucial stresses and shifts take place in people's minds. But this ingenious adaptation by Felicity Browne and Giles Havergal (who also directs) works well both as theatre and as an interpretation of the author's vision.

It is the story of a sophisticated, lonely woman, Stella (Kate Kitovitz), and her love affair with Robert (Mark Lewis) in the fragmented, "demented" microcosm of bomb-torn London. The novel's hallucinatory intensity grew out of Elizabeth Bowen's wartime experiences and her attachment to Charles Ritchie, the Canadian diplomat and diarist, to whom the book is dedicated.

Robert is shadowed by the mysterious Harrison (Christian Burgess), who becomes Stella's shadow-lover; this is not only a love story but a spy story. The standard criticism of the novel is that Robert is unreal and his defection to the Nazis (as opposed to the Communists) unlikely. The adaptation puts new words into his mouth to make sense of his politics, and the only criticism of Robert in this version might be his lack of passion: Mark Lewis has perfected a rather curious arm's-length embrace.

Kate Kitovitz is not the ideal Stella. She lacks the stature, style, and panache of the novel's heroine, and, with her out-glass gentility, does not seem so absolutely out of place as she is in the novel. Her love affair with Robert is a rather curious arm's-length embrace.

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Apolitical aspects

Dominique Goy-Blanquet

SHAKESPEARE
Julius Caesar
Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

After so many productions apparently designed specifically for infantile barbarians, the Stratford *Julius Caesar* rings a welcome change. Although in the past Terry Hands himself has advocated a relief from the austerity of the former management, he may well feel that this has now gone too far. It is becoming a rare pleasure to be allowed to hear Shakespeare's text without being distracted by elaborate side-shows or mesmerized by rock music.

Perhaps also the RSC has been influenced by the unqualified praise for their new theatre last season. The set for *Julius Caesar* actually looks like a replica of the Swan with its rosy brickwork, solid backstage wall and scarcity of props. It gives unrestricted room to the actors and leaves all the special effects to the electricians. Hands, who likes to light his own shows, creates wonders here. The prodigies of the fatal night conjure up fantastic shapes against the flaring colours of the brick. Shadows mysteriously emerge as from Hades while beams of light spot each of the conspirators in turn. Caesar's gigantic frame remains printed on the back wall after he has gone.

This production appears almost static compared with the lavish use of revolving scenery and agitated crowds which has become the dominant fashion. With all the space available, the actors hardly move from the apron and address most of their speeches directly to the audience. This mode of delivery makes for clarity. It is also a test of performance, cruelly underlining even minor defects. Not a word is lost in the process, but not all the actors come out unscathed. Roger Allam as Brutus effortlessly brings out the beauty and meaning of each line as if he just let Shakespeare's text breathe through him, but Sean Baker overacts and turns Cassius into a vulgar truck. William Chubb is helped by his size and makes the most of a minor part as a fawning Decius. Caesar, playing sugar-daddy to his buxom spouse, looks like the ruins of the noblest man that ever lived even before he is carved to pieces. And Portia does sound faintly suburban in spite of a

husky attractive voice. These noble Romans generally suffer from a lack of style which the attempted smartness of their costumes does not quite retrieve. Their soft white boots and peplums draped over judo tunics give them that vague look of futuristic Antiquity popularized by science fiction serials. They look more conventionally Roman, if slightly comical, when equipped for war with patent leather helmets and suede armour. These wars, briefly signified by the minimum of alarms and excursions, are as low-key as the rest of the production.

Much as one would like to praise the economy of Hands's approach, the price of it is finally heavy. All unnecessary items, and a few essential ones, have been removed from the stage in one mighty sweep. The anonymity of their costumes and surroundings leave the characters unrelated to any kind of context. The soldiers are as strangely absent from the battle scene as the plebeians are from the Forum. The programme states that approximately 113 lines have been cut, but some of these cuts are momentous. In his funeral oration, Brutus tries to explain to the crowd that this bloody sacrifice was necessary to save their republican liberties, but they show a complete misunderstanding of his motives by wanting him to be Caesar instead, and they give the final victory to Antony by adopting his more emotional presentation of the deed as an act of butchery. Here, the plebeians are represented only by recorded sounds of cheering and applause of the kind used in television studios.

The point made, that crowds are infinitely gullible, ignores the more disturbing one that something is wrong in the State which puts such crucial issues to the judgment of the mob. This treatment reduces the plot to the interplay of the main characters. The unwarranted re-appearance of Caesar's ghost on a deserted battlefield turns Brutus' drama into a private affair between himself and his conscience.

When most directors do not trust Shakespeare to be sufficiently entertaining by himself, Terry Hands should be warmly thanked for his careful attention to the lines of the play, even if he gives them an apolitical twist. The Swan-like set will serve, with the necessary alterations, for the other productions of the main house this year. If it impresses them with the same sort of sobriety, this is excellent news.

Inquisitorial insights

John Butt

TIRSO DE MOLINA
Heaven Bent, Hell Bound
Bridge Lane Theatre

Connoisseurs will not recognize this as Tirso's *El condenado por desconfiado*, ie, "Damned for Doubting", either from its title or from the text which has been drastically rewritten, not without theological consequences. Reading and watching Golden-Age Spanish drama are often peculiar experiences. It may be that the Counter-Reformation civilization that inspired it is as alien to most liberal-minded Westerners as the China of the Cultural Revolution or Khomeini's Iran. In any event, this intriguing production of a preposterous anti-Lutheran parable disables all the usual critical responses as totally as any street agitprop or Red Guards' ballet. But it has a familiar ring which reminds us that the genre of the religious *comedia* is not quite dead: the mixture of spectacular stagecraft and clodhopping sermonizing, the way the play dazzles you with its impudent theatrical fireworks and cheerfully insults your intelligence with its simple-minded preaching, irresistibly bring to mind the name of Brecht.

At the heart of the play is an enormous doctrinal pill to be swallowed, that the uncooperative spectator may go down with an attack of acute Protestantism. But the production, acting and John Clifford's free translation cost the pill in so many layers of wit, farce and irony that they soon beat down your resistance and leave you, until you actually take

the medicine, but far beyond the point where you wish you'd never come. This is a very funny and thought-provoking version. It wisely refuses to apologize for the text's crudity by playing for "depth" or symbolism. In fact neither the production nor the programme, with its cautionary reminders about the fate of Galileo and Bruno, tries to lure you inside the Inquisitorial world-view of the play. The result is a parody and at the same time a sharp account of the official ideology prevailing at a cruelly oppressive moment in Spanish history.

Given the play's simplistic message about free will there is no point looking for psychological plausibility in the characters: half the fun comes from the fact that anyone is at any time liable to sudden conversion or de-conversion. Kate Ingram, as the rakehell and mass murderer Lidora, does amazingly well to turn her wickedest woman in the world into a model Christian, and Paddy Fletcher as Paulo keeps you guessing whether he will end in monk's robes or sword in hand. In fact God looks down Grace so freely that by the end one can quite believe that the gangland cut-throat villain will make good his threat to repent and become a top Church leader.

Hispanists will not recall Tirso's text in line with "blame the cuts, not me", but they may feel that in its rowdy, frankly unbalanced nature of knockabout, poetry and musical comedy, the production is true to something in the spirit of Golden-Age drama. The actors, Mark Brickman and the Actors' Company, deserve congratulations for their difficult play into first theatre.

The symbols of faith

Cyril Mango

From Byzantium to El Greco: Greek Frescoes and Icons
Royal Academy, until June 21

The most intriguing item among those that were intended to be included in the exhibition at the Royal Academy (unfortunately, it could not be brought over but does feature in the Catalogue as No 63) is an icon discovered on the island of Syros as late as 1983. It depicts the Death or rather Dormition of the Virgin Mary and at first glance looks like a fairly typical product of late Byzantine art. A closer look reveals a number of unexpected features such as the unByzantine dove of the Holy Spirit that hovers above the recumbent Virgin emitting rays of light. Even odder are the three Italian candelsticks that stand in front of the bier, the middle one supported by bare-breasted caryatids. It is on this incongruous object that is inscribed the artist's signature, Domenikos Theotokopoulos (El Greco).

Does Byzantine art lead to El Greco? Except in the person of El Greco himself, the answer must, I think, be in the negative. Indeed, in the third quarter of the sixteenth century, when El Greco was growing up in Crete, Greek religious painting was leading to a dead end. In the previous 150 years, however, roughly from 1400 to 1550 it had experienced a remarkable flowering, and it is this which constitutes the focus of this fascinating exhibition.

True, a wider coverage has been attempted. The earliest specimens included are of the twelfth century and special mention should be made of the double-sided icon from Kastoria of the Virgin Hodegetria and the Man of Sorrows, and two splendid icons from the hermitage of St Neophytos in Cyprus (the Virgin Mary and Christ), not in the Catalogue, which show the Coptic style in all its severe purity. There is a fuller selection of Palaeologan icons, softer in style and more human in feeling, like the very fine bilateral one from Rhodes (No 18), the St George, perhaps from Patmos (No 19) and the newly acquired St Peter in the British Museum (No 16). These

and several others provide a starting-point, the state of the art before the fall of Constantinople in 1453. It may appear paradoxical that at the very juncture when all Greek lands were finding themselves under foreign domination, either Muslim or Roman Catholic, the craft of the icon painter should have gained a new lease of life. How this came about has become apparent only in the past twenty years and the full



Two mid-fifteenth-century icons from the exhibition reviewed here: left, St Anne with the Virgin, and right, The Virgin Kariotissa by Angelos.

story has not yet been told. We can now see, thanks to research in Venetian archives, that the chief centre of production was at Candia (Heraklion) in Crete, where a number of ateliers, headed by gifted artists, were engaged in what can almost be described as mass production, both for export and for the home market. They sometimes worked from pricked stencils (Nos 72, 73), hence the repetition of similar designs. They also catered for a clientele that was part Catholic, part Orthodox. The result was a hybrid art of considerable technical excellence ranging from the almost pure Greek to the almost pure Italian, depending, we pre-

sume, on what the purchaser wanted.

In some cases, indeed, like the Man of Sorrows (No 44), the Gothic Pietà (No 45) and the repeated Madre della Consolazione (Nos 42, 43, 46), one would hardly have guessed that these are Greek works. In others there is a curious blend of two traditions, the figure style tending to remain more conservative, while backgrounds and accessories become Italian-



ate. A Byzantine Virgin of the Annunciation wears a shawl decorated with fleurs-de-lis and sits in front of a Gothic building (No 48). The meeting of Christ and the Samaritan woman (No 49) takes place in a leafy landscape with a blue, not a gold sky, but a typically Byzantine jagged rock separates the City of Jerusalem (inscribed in Venetian spelling "C. Ierusalem") from the City of Samaria. At length, in the work of Emmanouel Lombardos, Michael Damaskinos and El Greco himself (No 62a) the figures, too, become Italian, even Mannerist. Note, however, that the same Damaskinos, who produced in the Venetian manner the

catenae to Gabriele the "dancing waves" (thus in the libretto, though my ears caught the word "glimmering": James Fenton's translation is a simple man of the people. The "blood and iron" (Verdi's phrase) of medieval Genoa are conveyed by trapdoors with steel spikes and the occasional fascist uniform, the Ligurian shore by an outcrop of black rock in the foreground and a quantity of white boulders tumbling on to the stage from the adjacent boxes. There is nothing to suggest the enchantment of the scene so delicately portrayed in the dawn prelude to Act One.

Certainly there is much to be said for using space and lighting to substitute for the clutter of props that Verdi's stage directions prescribe for the Prologue; and at least two of the crowd scenes are inventively handled: the incursion of the populace into the Council Chamber in the Act One finale, and the death of Boccanegra in Act Three, where they slowly pass across the stage engulfing the dying Doge as though unaware of his existence. One thought of Mahler's song, "Reveille".

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University of North Carolina Press
1 Gower Street London WC1E 6HA

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COMMENTARY

Wittier than thou

J. K. L. Walker

PETER NICHOLS
A Piece of My Mind
Apollo Theatre

In 1982 Peter Nichols retired to Shropshire to write a novel and here it is, transmuted into a play and staged in London on April Fools Day — "a jeu d'esprit, a promissory note, a piece of his mind". It is about a playwright, Ted Forrest (George Cole), who with his family retires to Herefordshire to write an autobiographical novel but fails and turns it into a play about his failure. The result is a bitter, intelligent comedy which, in its attempt to transfer to the stage the multiple authorial ironies of modern fiction, to wheedle or assault the audience out of its naive trust in the author, leaves Pirandello puffing far behind.

The audience at the Apollo seemed unready to slip the guiding hand, even when sharply reminded of its diminished role by the blent of sheep relayed through the auditorium. On the face of it, Nichols seems to be treating the paying guests as not particularly bright eavesdroppers on the torments of the creative process. At another level, Forrest/Nichols professes to remain in the grip of the "tyranny of form" and is playing the paradox for its entertainment value.

Nichols has, in any case, let it be known that he considers *A Piece of My Mind* to be about other things besides the processes of writing, notably the theme of envy among writers. Abstracting this from the magician's cabinet of the play calls for concentration. The tyranny of form gives us a roughly chronological account of Forrest's career as a playwright, presented as scenes representing chapters from the work in progress: the poverty-stricken beginnings in a two-room flat up sixty-eight stairs; humiliations at the hands of producer and agent — in the early 1960s, comments Forrest, "we all lived . . . by writing propaganda for swinging

Britain"; success and a degree of celebrity with a film about a pop-group, Jack Straw and the Rebels. All this is cut into and undercut by fantasies engendered, as Forrest's wife Dinah (Anna Carteret) duly observes, by lust, jealousy and envy: envy of Forrest's younger and more successful rival Miles Whittier, whose plays the *lumpen* Forrest children prefer to those of their father because they are better. At intervals this glamorous spotlight superstar bursts on stage, ejected from poor Forrest's cardiganed paranoia, to the triumphant blare of the Coronation Anthem.

There are private and not very important games going on here which have to do with Nichols's own relationships with Tom Stoppard and Charles Wood: Wood's television series, *Don't Forget to Write*, was about the travails of a writer (also played by George Cole) envious of a more successful colleague, said to have affinities with Nichols. This would be cloying were it not that Whittier may be seen equally as a symbol of the writer's frustrated perfectionism as of actual rivalry; a function that may be shared by the critic from the "By Jove" press (Jerome Willis), whose appearances, too, punctuate the play. "One can't help feeling that an actor as accomplished as Jerome Willis is wasted in the part of the critic", this person confides to the audience, when Forrest's back is turned.

Peter Nichols weaves the strands of this breathtaking counterpoint with skill and effrontery, to which the cast of five, playing between them nineteen characters, respond nimbly, with only the occasional grumble about being allowed insufficient time for costume changes. As Ted Forrest, George Cole anchors the play with his portrayal of a troubled, self-questioning man, whose outward simplicity and seriousness offer an effective contrast to the fireworks he is superintending, and lead one to wonder naively whether in fact Nichols didn't have rather a tough time of it in Shropshire. Well, the dog will in the end round up the sheep, especially perhaps a dog running interestingly backwards in circles.

Lovers and shadow-lovers

Victoria Glendinning

ELIZABETH BOWEN
The Heat of the Day
Adapted by Felicity Browne and Giles Havergal
Donmar Warehouse

Shared Experience's stage version of *The Heat of the Day*, Elizabeth Bowen's classic novel of the Second World War, is astonishingly successful. Bowen's fiction is hard to dramatize because its impact is a matter of atmosphere, and the crucial stresses and shifts take place in people's minds. But this ingenious adaptation by Felicity Browne and Giles Havergal (who also directs) works well both as theatre and as an interpretation of the author's vision.

It is the story of a sophisticated, lonely woman, Stella (Kate Kitovitz), and her love affair with Robert (Mark Lewis) in the fragmented, "demented" microcosm of bombed-out London. The novel's hallucinatory intensity grew out of Elizabeth Bowen's wartime experiences and her attachment to Charles Ritchie, the Canadian diplomat and diarist, to whom the book is dedicated.

Robert is shadowed by the mysterious Harrison (Christian Burgess), who becomes Stella's shadow-lover; this is not only a love story but a spy story. The standard criticism of the novel is that Robert is unreal and his defection to the Nazis (as opposed to the Communists) unlikely. The adaptation puts new words into his mouth to make sense of his politics, and the only criticism of Robert (in this position might be his lack of passion: Mark Lewis has perfected a rather curious arm's-length embrace.

Kate Kitovitz is not the ideal Stella. She lacks the stature, style and panache of the novel's heroine; and, with her cut-glass gentility, does not seem so absolutely out of place as she ought in Holme Dene, the Home Counties, villa whose middle-class lovelessness bred

treason in Robert. His mother ("Mutkins") is played with lethal complacency, and inexcusable knitting, by Patricia Lawrence.

The real triumph of the evening belongs to Charon Bourke and Roberta Taylor as Louie and Connie, the working-class girls whose problems are worked out in comic parallel to the tragedy of Stella and Robert. These two actresses play up to each other with an understanding which gives their scenes together an intimate dramatic momentum of their own. Charon Bourke plays Louie with a heartbreaking naïveté, adenoids, and a speech defect which refers back, perhaps, to Elizabeth Bowen's own more patrician stammer. As Stella says, "Below one level, everybody's horribly alike" — rich and poor, spies and spychatchers.

The designer Stewart Laing has achieved a single multi-purpose set whose groupings of nondescript furniture serve satisfactorily as Stella's flat, Louie's room, Holme Dene, a restaurant, or Regent's Park. The stage is littered with autumn leaves and shards of broken glass. Period realism is conveyed in the details: the stout black telephones, the electric fire, the gas-mask, the sexily sinister titty hats and belted overcoats worn by the men, their endless lighting and grinding out of untipped cigarettes taken from silver cases. An older man in the audience on the press night was heard to observe that the felt of men's hats in the 1940s was heavier and thicker, and that Robert would never have committed the solecism of buttoning the bottom button of his waistcoat. Perfect authenticity is unattainable, and perhaps pointless.

Charles Ritchie was there, too. For him, it was a "shared experience" of a unique kind. His contribution to the realism debate was the comment that he could not remember anyone carrying a gas-mask in a little cardboard box as they do on the stage. He had always carried "that snooty object" along with his cigarettes, in a greenish cloth sachet.

Apolitical aspects

Dominique Goy-Blanquet

SHAKESPEARE
Julius Caesar
Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

After so many productions apparently designed specifically for infantile barbarians, the Stratford *Julius Caesar* rings a welcome change. Although in the past Terry Hands himself has advocated a relief from the austerity of the former management, he may well feel that this has now gone too far. It is becoming a rare pleasure to be allowed to hear Shakespeare's text without being distracted by elaborate side-shows or mesmerized by rock music.

Perhaps also the RSC has been influenced by the unqualified praise for their new theatre last season. The set for *Julius Caesar* actually looks like a replica of the Swan with its rosy brick-work, solid backstage wall and scarcity of props. It gives unrestricted room to the actors and leaves all the special effects to the electricians. Hands, who likes to light his own shows, creates wonders here. The prodigies of the fatal night conjure up fantastic shapes against the flaring colours of the brick. Shadows mysteriously emerge as from Hades while beams of light spot each of the conspirators in turn. Caesar's gigantic frame remains printed on the back wall after he has gone.

This production appears almost static compared with the lavish use of revolving scenery and agitated crowds which has become the dominant fashion. With all the space available, the actors hardly move from the apron and address most of their speeches directly to the audience. This mode of delivery makes for clarity. It is also a test of performance, cruelly underlining even minor defects. Not a word is lost in the process, but not all the actors come out unscathed. Roger Allam as Brutus effortlessly brings out the beauty and meaning of each line as if he just let Shakespeare's text breathe through him, but Sean Baker overacts and turns Cassius into a vulgar thug. William Chubb is helped by his size and makes the most of a minor part as a fawning Decius. Caesar, playing sugar-daddy to his buxom spouse, looks like the ruins of the noblest man that ever lived even before he is carved to pieces. And Portia does sound faintly suburban in spite of a

husky attractive voice. These noble Romans generally suffer from a lack of style which the attempted smartness of their costumes does not quite retrieve. Their soft white boots and peplums draped over judo tunics give them that vague look of futuristic Antiquity popularized by science fiction serials. They look more conventionally Roman, if slightly comical, when equipped for war with patent leather helmets and suede armour. These wars, briefly signified by the minimum of alarms and excursions, are as low-key as the rest of the production.

Much as one would like to praise the economy of Hands's approach, the price of it is finally heavy. All unnecessary items, and a few essential ones, have been removed from the stage in one mighty sweep. The anonymity of their costumes and surroundings leave the characters unrelated to any kind of context. The soldiers are as strangely absent from the battle scene as the plebeians are from the Forum. The programme states that approximately 113 lines have been cut, but some of these cuts are momentous. In his funeral oration, Brutus tries to explain to the crowd that this bloody sacrifice was necessary to save their republican liberties, but they show a complete misunderstanding of his motives by wanting him to be Caesar instead, and they give the final victory to Antony by adopting his more emotional presentation of the deed as an act of butchery. Here, the plebeians are represented only by recorded sounds of cheering and applause of the kind used in television studios.

The point made, that crowds are infinitely gullible, ignores the more disturbing one that something is wrong in the State which puts such crucial issues to the judgment of the mob. This treatment reduces the plot to the interplay of the main characters. The unwarranted reappearance of Caesar's ghost on a deserted battlefield turns Brutus' drama into a private affair between himself and his conscience. When most directors do not trust Shakespeare to be sufficiently entertaining by himself, Terry Hands should be warmly thanked for his careful attention to the lines of the play, even if he gives them an apolitical twist. The Swan-like set will serve, with the necessary alterations, for the other productions of the main house this year. If it inspires them with the same sort of sobriety, this is excellent news.

Inquisitorial insights

John Butt

TIRSO DE MOLINA
Heaven Bent, Hell Bound
Bridge Lane Theatre

Connoisseurs will not recognize this as Tirso's *El condenado por desconfiado*, ie, "Damned for Doubting", either from its title or from the text which has been drastically rewritten, not without theological consequences. Reading and watching Golden-Age Spanish drama are often peculiar experiences. It may be that the Counter-Reformation civilization that inspired it is as alien to most liberal-minded Westerners as the China of the Cultural Revolution or Khomeli's Iran. In any event, this intriguing production of a preposterous anti-Lutheran parable disables all the usual critical responses as totally as any street agitprop or Red Guards' ballet. But it has a familiar ring which reminds us that the genre of the religious *comedia* is not quite dead: the mixture of spectacular stagecraft and clodhopping sermonizing, the way the play dazzles you with its impudent theatrical fireworks and cheerfully insults your intelligence with its simple-minded preaching, irresistibly bring to mind the name of Brecht.

At the heart of the play is an enormous doctrinal pill so unswallowable that the uncooperative spectator may go down with an attack of acute Protestantism. But the production, telling and John Clifford's free translation cut the pill in so many layers of wit, farce and irony that they soon lead you to your feet into a not-trivial debate until you actually take a

the medicine, but far beyond the point where you wish you'd never come. This is a very funny and thought-provoking version. It wisely refuses to apologize for the text's crudity by playing for "depth" or symbolism. In fact neither the production nor the programme, with its cautionary reminders about the fate of Galileo and Bruno, tries to lure you inside the Inquisitorial world-view of the play. The result is a parody and at the same time a shrewd account of the official ideology prevailing at a cruelly oppressive moment in Spanish history. Given the play's simplistic message about free will there is no point looking for psychological plausibility in the characters: half the fun comes from the fact that anyone is at any time liable to sudden conversion or de-conversion. Kate Ingram, as the rakehell and mass murderer Lidora, does amazingly well to turn "the wickedest woman in the world" into a model Christian, and Paddy Fletcher as Paulo keeps you guessing whether he will end in moral down Grace so freely that by the end you can quite believe that the gangland cut-throat Galyán will make good his threat to repeat and become a top Church leader.

Hispanists will not recall Tirso's text in lines like "blame the cuts, not me", but they may feel that in its rowdy, frankly unbalanced mixture of knockabout, poetry and moralizing, of bantering about spirituality, this warm and engaging production is true to something in the spirit of Golden-Age drama. The director, Mark Brickman and the Actors' Touring Company deserve congratulations for transforming a difficult play into fine theatre.

The symbols of faith

Cyril Mango

From Byzantium to El Greco: Greek Frescoes and Icons
Royal Academy, until June 21

The most intriguing item among those that were intended to be included in the exhibition at the Royal Academy (unfortunately, it could not be brought over but does feature in the Catalogue as No 63) is an icon discovered on the island of Syros as late as 1983. It depicts the Death or rather Dormition of the Virgin Mary and at first glance looks like a fairly typical product of late Byzantine art. A closer look reveals a number of unexpected features such as the unByzantine dove of the Holy Spirit that hovers above the recumbent Virgin emitting rays of light. Even odder are the three Italian candlesticks that stand in front of the tier, the middle one supported by bare-breasted caryatids. It is on this incongruous object that is inscribed the artist's signature, Domenikos Theotokopoulos (El Greco).

Does Byzantine art lead to El Greco? Except in the person of El Greco himself, the answer must, I think, be in the negative. Indeed, in the third quarter of the sixteenth century, when El Greco was growing up in Crete, Greek religious painting was leading to a dead end. In the previous 150 years, however, roughly from 1400 to 1550 it had experienced a remarkable flowering, and it is this which constitutes the focus of this fascinating exhibition.

True, a wider coverage has been attempted. The earliest specimens included are of the twelfth century and special mention should be made of the double-sided icon from Kastoria of the Virgin Hodegetria and the Man of Sorrows, and two splendid icons from the hermitage of St Neophytos in Cyprus (the Virgin Mary and Christ), not in the Catalogue, which show the Comnenian style in all its severe purity. There is a fuller selection of Palaeologan icons, softer in style and more human in feeling, like the very fine bilateral one from Rhodes (No 18), the St George, perhaps from Protoknesos (No 19) and the newly acquired St Peter in the British Museum (No 16). These

and several others provide a starting-point, the state of the art before the fall of Constantinople in 1453. It may appear paradoxical that at the very juncture when all Greek lands were finding themselves under foreign domination, either Muslim or Roman Catholic, the craft of the icon painter should have gained a new lease of life. How this came about has become apparent only in the past twenty years and the full



Two mid-fifteenth-century icons from the exhibition reviewed here: left, St Anne with the Virgin, and right, The Virgin Kardiaissa by Angelos.

story has not yet been told. We can now see, thanks to research in Venetian archives, that the chief centre of production was at Candia (Heraklion) in Crete, where a number of ateliers, headed by gifted artists, were engaged in what can almost be described as mass production, both for export and for the home market. They sometimes worked from pricked stencils (Nos 72, 73), hence the repetition of similar designs. They also catered for a clientele that was part Catholic, part Orthodox. The result was a hybrid art of considerable technical excellence ranging from the almost pure Greek to the almost pure Italian, depending, we pre-

sume, on what the purchaser wanted.

In some cases, indeed, like the Man of Sorrows (No 44), the Gothic Pietà (No 45) and the repeated Madre della Consolazione (Nos 42, 43, 46), one would hardly have guessed that these are Greek works. In others there is a curious blend of two traditions, the figure style tending to remain more conservative, while backgrounds and accessories become Italian-



ate. A Byzantine Virgin of the Annunciation wears a shawl decorated with fleurs-de-lis and sits in front of a Gothic building (No 48). The meeting of Christ and the Samaritan woman (No 49) takes place in a leafy landscape with a blue, not a gold sky, but a typically Byzantine jagged rock separates the City of Jerusalem (inscribed in Venetian spelling "C. Ierusalem") from the City of Samaria. At length, in the work of Emmanouel Lombardos, Michael Damaskinos and El Greco himself (No 62a) the figures, too, become Italian, even Mannerist. Note, however, that the same Damaskinos, who produced in the Venetian manner the

The trappings of high office

Julian Budden

GIUSEPPE VERDI
Simon Boccanegra
Coliseum

For the older generation of ENO habitués Simon Boccanegra must hold special memories. First produced in English at Sadlers Wells in 1948, it was, like Rimsky-Korsakov's *Snow Maiden*, one of the company's out-of-the-way specialties: a vehicle for their outstanding artists, Arnold Matters, and a testimony to their director Norman Tucker's unfashionable faith in the lesser-known Verdi. Despite the unpromising subject, the confusion of the plot (compounded by Bolto's later revision of the text), the preponderance of low male voices and the relegation of the love interest to second place, this noble work drew full houses night after night. Together with Fritz Busch's *Die Meistersinger* and *Forza del destino* of 1951 and the Covent Garden *Don Carlos* of 1958 it revealed the beauties of what used to be called "transitional Verdi" — that area of his output that stretches from *La traviata* to *Aida* — and so contributed to the present day Verdi boom, which happily shows no signs of abating.

After having quietly slipped from the ENO repertoire some thirty years ago, it now returns in a very different form, David Alden's production is ruthlessly modern. Presumably in order to stress the universality of the story he has cut it to no one time or place. Costumes range from the contemporary (black suits for the noble, black shawls for their womenfolk) to the twelfth century (crusading armour for the Man of Act Three). As the Doge, Boccanegra wears a scarlet gown with ermine stole and a black helmet. During his celebrated appearance in Act One he gradually divests himself

of all three, finishing up bare-headed in braces and shirt-sleeves, thus showing that beneath the trappings of high office he remains at heart a simple man of the people. The "blood and iron" (Verdi's phrase) of medieval Genoa are conveyed by trapdoors with steel spikes and the occasional fascist uniform, the Ligurian shore by an outcrop of black rock in the foreground and a quantity of white boulders tumbling on to the stage from the adjacent boxes. There is nothing to suggest the enchantment of the scene so delicately portrayed in the dawn prelude to Act One.

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cates to Gabriele the "dancing waves" (thus in the libretto, though my ears caught the word "glimmering": James Fenton's translation is for the most part strong and singable, just occasionally falling bathetically into the colloquial) when our only glimpse of the sea, visible through a rectangular hole in the back-cloth, lies in the opposite direction, and the waves, far from dancing or glimmering are clearly being lashed to fury. In general there is too much unnecessary movement. People are continually throwing themselves to the ground and forcing others to stoop in order to address them.

For all that the standard of vocal performance on the first night was remarkably high. The twin pillars on which the opera rests are Boccanegra and Fiesco. As the corsair turned Doge Jonathan Summers is outstanding in a part that usually calls for a singer of riper years and experience. His tone is fresh, his line firm and his diction exemplary, and he encompasses the full range of expression required, from tenderness to anger and sublime authority. I could merely have wished for a slightly more conversational manner in certain recitatives in the Prologue and Act Two. As Fiesco Gwynne Howell is in magnificent voice; and if the fussy production sometimes compromises the character's dignity — for Fiesco should be as stately as his vocal line — the singing never does. Janice Cairns as Amelia makes a faintly uncertain start in one of Verdi's most taxing cavatinas, but soon gets into her stride. Arthur Davies gives a full-bloded account of the ungrateful role of Gabriele; Alan Opie and Clive Bailey are excellent as the villainous Paolo and Pietro. Special praise must go to Mark Elder, who paces the opera most sensitively, bringing out all the rich and varied detail of a score which in its most inspired, momentary passages, that of *Otello*.

COMMENTARY

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University of North Carolina Press
1 Gower Street London WC1E 6HA

John Butt

Burning questions

Jonathan Sumption

ROBERT BARTLETT
Trial by Fire and Water: The medieval judicial ordeal
182pp. Oxford: Clarendon Press. £19.50.
0198219733

Trial by ordeal is a supremely rational procedure. It is an appeal to God to reveal the truth by performing a miracle. Provided that you hold a particular view of the natural world there is nothing simpler or more obvious. Suppose you believe that there are no laws of nature, but only conventions which God is apt to observe unless He chooses not to. Suppose that, like the twelfth-century English chronicler William of Malmesbury, you believe that "not a leaf falls from a branch" without the direct intervention of the Almighty. It is what most men have believed at most times. Does it not follow that everything that happens is a manifestation of God's will? The water that swallows up the accused, or the fire that does not burn him, are they not also His work? It is a good question. Modern jurisprudence is a historical aberration.

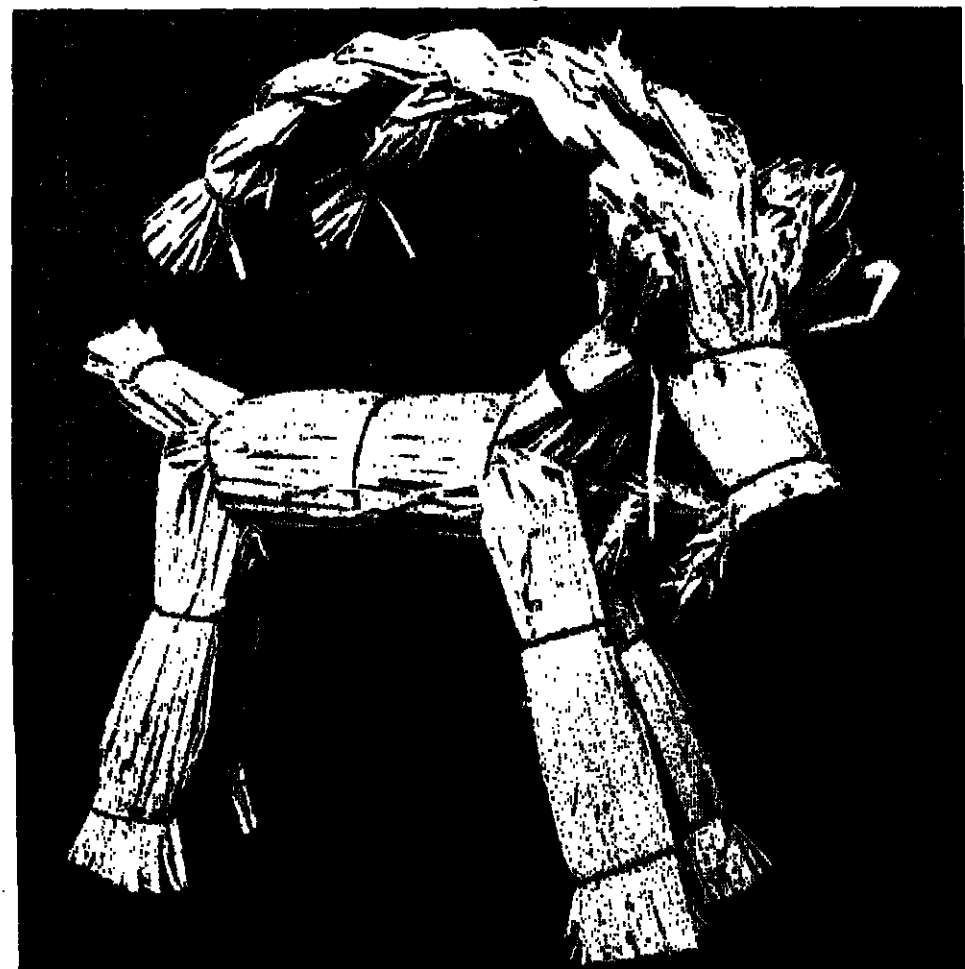
The ordeal had its origins among the Franks of the eighth and ninth centuries and it lasted (isolated occurrences apart) until the beginning of the thirteenth. Robert Bartlett, in *Trial by Fire and Water*, offers a persuasive explanation for its popularity. The most important characteristic of any system of justice is that its verdict should command universal, or almost universal acceptance. For most of the Middle Ages, there was no other method of proof which could be relied upon to do this. The explanation lies not simply in the unsentimental views of the population, but in the existence of genuine objections to every alternative mode of proof. Witnesses, especially if they were parties, were apt to lie; and even if they were not parties, were subject to overpowering social pressures from the small, unpoliced communities in which they lived. Documentary evidence was non-existent, except sometimes in disputes about title, when it might exist but might or might not be genuine. Elaborate forensic techniques for weighing and testing oral and documentary evidence simply were not known and would not necessarily have commanded general assent if they had been. Why should men have trusted more in the verdicts of other men than in that of God? Do we not ourselves find it necessary to dehumanize judges by clothing them in an unusual costume and concealing their individuality beneath horsehair wigs?

There is a revealing decree quoted here from a Frankish Council. Freeman, it ordained, might cure themselves of crime by their oath, but if their evidence was disputed and if they were "deemed guilty by the people", then let them carry the red-hot iron. It was the need to silence public doubt which created the ordeal and preserved it for four centuries, indeed for much longer in isolated cases. Two people were convicted at Chelmsford Assizes for swimming a witch in 1864. In parts of Italy, it has happened within living memory.

The circumstances in which the ordeal was abandoned in Western Europe are as revealing as anything about it. It was certainly not abandoned because Europeans were becoming more rational. The truly materialist objection to it, based upon a conception of natural law, was reserved for cranks like the Emperor Frederick II Hohenstaufen. The reason was that the clergy, whose participation in the ordeal was essential, became increasingly re-

luctant to be associated with judicial processes of any kind, and in particular with those which might end in the administration of the death penalty. Some of them also objected to "tempting God". The Lateran Council of 1215 abruptly forbade clergymen to be associated with ordeals and the practice almost equally abruptly ended. The event perplexed the public. The void which it left in Europe's criminal jurisprudence was not easily filled, for except in some precocious communities (such as England) it took centuries to devise a generally acceptable means of convicting by the evidence of others a criminal who had neither been caught red-handed nor confessed.

Medieval men were obsessed by law and by the technicalities of law, a frame of mind which produces dull sources and dull books based upon them. A monograph which not only covers the whole chronological and geographical range, but does so as elegantly and thoughtfully as this one, is a considerable achievement.



A Swedish straw figure of the Harvest Goat, representing the corn-spirit; reproduced from European Mythology by Jacqueline Simpson (144pp, with 45 colour and 80 black-and-white illustrations. Twickenham: Hamlyn. £5.95. 0660055100 8).

Circumspect supervisors

Alastair Hamilton

STEPHEN HALICZER (Editor)
Inquisition and Society in Early Modern Europe
196pp. Croom Helm. £25.
0709912633

Even if the Holy Office of the Inquisition was intended to protect Christianity from heresy in all its variety, the inquisitions of early modern Europe were founded to solve problems of the moment. The Spanish Inquisition, like the later Portuguese one, was established to test the Catholicism of recent converts from Islam and, above all, from Judaism; and the primary concern of the Roman Inquisition, set up in 1542, was to combat Protestantism.

There were periods in their history in which these inquisitions followed their first objectives with remarkable single-mindedness. From the 1480s to the 1530s, and from the 1680s to the 1720s, the most numerous victims of the Spanish Inquisition were suspected Judaizers. After an initial moment of moderation, the Portuguese Inquisition devoted its attention almost entirely to converted Jews from the 1580s until the early eighteenth century. Yet, often in order to ensure their own survival, the inquisitions also had to cope with other cases of heresy and with crimes which were proved, sometimes with considerable ingenuity, to be against the Faith. The Spanish Inquisition, which turned upon Albigensians, Erasmusians and Protestants as soon as the first wave of Judaizers had been castigated, also managed to extend its jurisdiction to the illegal export of horses and the counterfeiting of coins. By and large, however, when the Roman Inquisition was not detecting Protestants, and when the Spaniards were not punishing Judaizers, they were investigating the habits of fornicators, blasphemers, sorcerers and witches, or, particularly in the years after the Council of Trent, tackling the problems caused by an inadequate knowledge of the fundamental doctrines of Roman Catholicism.

The nine papers in *Inquisition and Society in Early Modern Europe* deal with some of the many areas on which the inquisitions of southern Europe concentrated. Although the introduction suggests that one of the subjects will be the Portuguese Inquisition, this is only mentioned once, in connection with Judaizers, in the first article by Stephen Haliczer, the book's editor. Otherwise the balance is heavily in favour of the Spanish Inquisition, with only three papers on the Roman.

The aspect of the Spanish Inquisition which most attracts scholars at present is the encounter with popular culture when the Holy Office became an instrument of the Counter-Reformation; and the papers of Sara Nalle and Jean-Pierre De Dieu present new information about the inquisitors' struggle against the ignorance and illiteracy that produced far greater deviations from the Faith than did heterodox convictions derived from theological study. The papers on the Roman Inquisition are still more interesting. Nicolas Denison, writing on the treatment of Italian Jews in the sixteenth century, shows that, despite local orders of expulsion and attempts to curb the freedom of movement, professional activity and social intercourse, the Jews, both observant and converted, found greater tolerance in Italy than in most other parts of Europe. A situation which accounts for an unusual degree of communication between Jews and Christians in the late Renaissance. In her essay "Magical Healing, Love Magic and the Inquisition in Late Sixteenth-Century Modena", Mary O'Neill demonstrates the pragmatism and moderation with which the Roman Inquisition treated cases of magical healing, which only slightly greater severity in its attitude to love magic. In both fields the Roman Inquisition acted with more caution and sobriety than the witch-hunting tribunals of northern Europe, partly because of this rational approach. Reports of the trials can now be used as a guide to those popular religious beliefs and superstitions which are an inexhaustible source of fascination for modern historians.

God, language and nationhood

Dimitri Obolensky

ROMAN JAKOBSON
Selected Writings
Volume Six, Early Slavic Paths and Crossroads
Edited by Stephen Rudy
Part One: Comparative Slavic Studies: The Cyrillic-Methodian tradition
688.50.
Part Two: Medieval Slavic Studies
287.10.
942pp. The Hague: Mouton (distributed in the UK by Global Book Resources).
3110106051 and 311010606X

Volume Six of Roman Jakobson's *Selected Writings* consists of two substantial tomes. The author was able to select the contents and read most of the proofs before his death in July 1982. The subsequent editorial work was done by Stephen Rudy, who contributed a brief but informative preface. The forty-five studies (five are here published for the first time, and eight of the others have been specially translated from Czech) were written over a period of sixty years (1922-82), about one-third in Czechoslovakia before the Second World War, the rest in the United States, where Jakobson moved in 1942.

Not all who know Jakobson as one of the leading philologists and linguists of our time may be aware that some of his most important work was devoted to the cultural issues of the sixteenth-century mission of Cyril and Methodius to the Slavs. These two brothers, Byzantines from Thessalonica (Cyril's secular name was Constantine), invented a Slavonic alphabet and translated from the Greek, for the benefit of the Slavs of Moravia, the Christian Scriptures and liturgy. The different Slavonic languages were then far closer to each other than they are now: so the translations of Constantine-Cyril and Methodius became for all the Slavs an Open Sesame to the religious and cultural world of Byzantium and, by stimulating further translations of Greek sacred and secular writings, laid the foundation of a new language (Old Church Slavonic) which became the common literary idiom of those East European peoples - Bulgarians, Serbs, Russians and Romanians - who through conversion to Christianity gained entry into the Byzantine cultural commonwealth.

The study of this mission became one of Jakobson's central concerns soon after he moved to America, although his previous work on early Czech literature had already led him to consider the survival of Slav vernacular literature in medieval Central Europe. The "Cyrillic-Methodian tradition", a concept he discussed in many of his works, is the principal theme of these two volumes; the major side-lines, such as medieval Czech culture and comparative Slavonic literature, are closely linked to it. This central theme divides into three subjects: the poetics of the earliest Slavonic texts concerned with the Cyrillic-Methodian mission; the impact of this mission on the cultural life of Bohemia; and the ideological basis of the Cyrillic-Methodian tradition. Each is illuminated by Jakobson's renowned philological insight, literary sensitivity and mastery of the comparative method.

In the study of Old Church Slavonic poetry - "the Slavic response to Byzantine poetry" - to cite the title of his paper to the International Congress of Byzantine Studies in Ohrid in 1961 - Jakobson was a pioneer. As early as 1919 he wrote to his teacher at Moscow University, the celebrated philologist A. A. Shakhmatov, to tell him of his discovery that the earliest Russian Church hymns followed a distinct syllabic rhythm. His letter, on Shakhmatov's suggestion, was published in the 1923 volume of the *Bulletin of the Russian Academy of Science*, and proved a landmark in the study of early Slav poetics. Ten years later his belief, which followed from this discovery, that fragments of poetry he had found in several Old Church Slavonic prose texts, received powerful support from his friend N. S. Trubetzkoy, who proved that Constantine-Cyril's encounter with St Gregory of Nazianzus, embedded in Constantine's "Cyrillic-Methodian" biography, was written in Old Church Slavonic syllabic verse. A further step forward was Jakobson's identification of the fragments in the *Pravoslavnyy slovar*, showing that Constantine was the creator of written Slavonic

poetry: a conclusion he successfully confirmed in the study of the *Proglas*, a prologue to the translation of the Greek Gospels, whose metrical structure was patterned on the Byzantine twelve-syllable line and which, in agreement with most scholars today, he attributed to Constantine. He returned to this remarkable work again and again, subjecting it to minute formal analysis, several times translating it into English and uncovering its ideology, marked by a fervent apology of vernacular languages and a plea for a full understanding of the Word of God, expressed in the Scriptures and the liturgy. The last words Jakobson wrote for publication a few weeks before his death are two brief quotations from the *Proglas*: "Then hear now with your own mind . . . Open greatly the doors of your reason".

The impact of the Cyrillic-Methodian tradition on medieval Bohemia is discussed frequently in these two volumes. After Methodius' death in 885, this tradition was banned in Moravia, and its heirs became the Bulgarians and the Czechs. In Bohemia, Old Church Slavonic literature and the Slavonic liturgy (of the Roman, no longer of the Greek, rite) survived alongside Latin Christianity for two centuries more, notably in monasteries such as the Abbey of Sázava near Prague. Not till the late eleventh century was Bohemia's bi-liturgical situation brought to an end by papal enforcement of Latin. Even then the Cyrillic-Methodian tradition was not wholly uprooted, though its survival in the Czech lands, as Jakobson wrote in 1982, "still awaits adequate study". Its revival in Prague in the mid-fourteenth century by the Emperor Charles IV, and its later influence on the Hussite movement, are but islands recorded in a largely uncharted sea.

The belief that every Christian people has the right to worship God and hear the Scriptures read in their own language was the key-note of the Cyrillic-Methodian movement. This belief was proclaimed in their writings by Constantine and Methodius, and by their disciples in Moravia, Bohemia, Bulgaria and Russia. Glossing it in his article "The Beginning of National Self-Determination in Europe", written in New York in 1944, Jakobson eloquently and persuasively, though not without an occasional touch of romantic modernization, reconstructed the ideology of the Cyrillic-Methodian movement. This ideology could be summarized as follows. By acquiring the Scriptures and the liturgy in their own language the Slavs had entered a chosen and privileged society, within which every nation has its peculiar gifts and every people its legitimate calling. For all tongues are equal in the sight of God; and it is through his mother tongue which is man's most precious and intimate possession, that He can come into closest contact with the human soul. Thus the idea of a consecrated nation was combined with the concept of a plurality of languages equal in status, and the incipient nationalism of East European countries elevated to the notion of an ecumenical society of Christian peoples.

The emotional supports of this ideology were pride and joy in the possession of a vernacular liturgy. This liturgy, as Jakobson has shown, includes in its eucharistic prayers, both in Greek and Slavonic, passages of recognizable verse; and Constantine, its translator, was able "to affirm and deepen the sovereignty and equality that are bestowed on every nation and on everyone within each nation as soon as the native word has found its access to the Holy Communion, which, by the Middle Ages, was conceived as the acme of attainable communion".

All this was not achieved without struggle. As Jakobson repeatedly pointed out, Constantine and Methodius, as well as their immediate disciples, were fighters; fighters for a cause that had to be defended by sustained and powerful arguments. Their opponents came from the ranks of the Frankish clergy in Moravia, who regarded these two Greeks from Byzantium as trespassers on their own missionary preserve, and from those conservatives, mainly Latin clerics, who rejected the Slavonic liturgy on principle, claiming that only three languages - Hebrew, Greek and Latin - were suitable for public worship. Against these "trilingualists" Constantine and Methodius fought their longest verbal battles. Hence the abundance, in their writings and in those of their disciples, of arguments, counter-arguments,

apologies and justifications. These were mostly based on an ingenious exegesis of Scripture: the citation of St Paul's plea for intelligibility in public worship (1 Corinthians 14); a comparison between the invention of "the Slavonic letters" and the events of Pentecost, when tongues of fire descended upon Christ's apostles, who "were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues" (Acts 2:4); the belief that the Pentecostal miracle, by reuniting the languages of the earth, repealed the confusion of tongues which followed the building of the Tower of Babel; and - at its most ambitious - the claim that the Slavs, now endowed with the Scriptures and the liturgy in their native language, are able to share in the transfiguration of the world foretold by the Prophet Isaiah (29:18; 35:6). This last idea, which brings to many writings of the Cyrillic-Methodian school the breath of a cultural springtime, is expressed with particular eloquence in the *Proglas*, which affirms that the bounty of "the Word", defined both as the sacred vernacular tongue and the Logos or incarnate Christ, can transfigure man's every sense: "Then hear now with your own mind, listen all you Slavs: hear the Word, for it came from God, the Word that nourishes human souls, the Word that strengthens heart and mind, the Word that prepares all to know God".

A few of the arguments and statements in these two volumes have a slightly dated ring. It is hardly necessary today to attack what Jakobson called the "aesthetic egocentrism" of the nineteenth century, with its indebtedness to the Romantic movement, Victorian values and the belief in progress; we are perhaps less in danger today than we were in 1927 of "looking at the Middle Ages through the spectacles of an Erasmus of Rotterdam or a Bollesu"; and recent historical research has shown that "the schism of 1054" was not the definitive rift between Greek and Latin Christendom which Jakobson believed it to have been.

These few marginal reservations can in no



Church of the Pokrov on the Nerl River, near Vladimir; reproduced from Cyril Mango's *Byzantine Architecture* (213pp. Faber & Faber. £12.95. 0571 145140).

way detract from the splendid achievement of these two volumes. They not only contribute much that is new to the already enormous library of Cyrillic-Methodian studies. They are also evidence of the mastery skill with which, during his long life as a scholar, Roman Jakobson was able to interweave the cultures of what, true to his vocation as a philologist, he called "two conjugate worlds - Byzantium and Slavdom".

Praying the Fathers in aid

Nicolas Barker

THOMAS MORE
Complete Works
Volume Eleven: The Answer to a Poisoned Book
Edited by Stephen Merriam Foley and Clarence H. Miller
424pp. Yale University Press. £60.
0300031297

The issue of the eucharistic controversy in the early years of the Reformation was always central, but complicated by the fact that each of the reformers had his own opinion, none wholly agreeing with the others. Much was made of this disunity by their Catholic opponents, but it did not make their arguments easy to refute. Especially here, the protean quality of Reformation theological writing, with its many forms and constant changes, made answering it difficult for the apologist.

The roots of the controversy, quite apart from the complexities in their writings about the Real Presence on the part of the early Fathers, Ambrose, Chrysostom and (especially) Augustine, went a long way back, to the ninth century when the issue emerges in the works of Paschasius Radbertus and Ratramnus, becoming explicit in the confrontation between Lanfranc and Berengar of Tours: Argument brought definition, and definition dogma: the feast of Corpus Christi

was instituted in 1264, with a liturgy composed by Thomas Aquinas. The sacramentarian view, that the bread and wine remain bread and wine though filled with Christ's presence through sacramental change, nevertheless remained. All this made matter ripe for the reformers.

Luther was at first unwilling to take a firm stance, ignored the letter from Cornelius Hoen suggesting that the "est" in "hoc est corpus meum" meant "significant", and reproved Karlstadt for celebrating the first non-sacramental communion during his absence at the Wartburg. Hoen's letter stimulated Zwingli, however, who moved to a firm sacramentarianism, expressed in *De vera et falsa religione*, and Oecolampadius compiled a set of patristic passages which became a handbook of the eucharistic controversy, now ever more complex and widespread. Erasmus, who despised the hair-splitting precision of the orthodox as much as the ignorant iconoclasm of the reformers, attacked first one and then the other.

Thomas More's reading of the Fathers predated even his long acquaintance with Erasmus, and it is likely that he and Erasmus discussed this problem before it became a public issue. The English exiles Royce, Tyndale and Barlow were quick to deny the Real Presence, and Barlow's *Rede me ind be not wrothe* was one of the most popular of the tracts that the authorities tried to suppress. But it was Tyndale's attractive disciple John Faith who made it a public issue in England. More was

much involved in the attempts to suppress Faith, but hopes that he might recant delayed the publication of his *Letter against Faith*. In the meantime came the need to answer *The Souper of the Lorde*, published in April 1533.

In *The Answer to a Poisoned Book*, edited by Stephen Merriam Foley and Clarence H. Miller as Volume Eleven of *The Complete Works of St Thomas More*, Michael Anderg clearly demonstrates that *The Souper of the Lorde* was by George Joye, a lightweight character despised by Tyndale, but with a lively and effective style. More deals exclusively with the first part of his book, the interpretation of John 6. Here Joye did little more than translate Zwingli, relying on Oecolampadius for patristic evidence. More demolished his case, using not only the medieval centos but his own wide reading and deep knowledge of Augustine (quoted rarely and selectively by the reformers). His quotations from Cyril, Theophylact and Chrysostom show that he had read the recently published editions. His translations here are among his most moving passages of English prose, and confuting Joye's more trifling arguments gives his work a light-hearted touch absent from the sombre onslaughts on Faith and Tyndale.

The Yale edition is a model of its kind. The long introduction precedes a careful text and the notes distinguish the controversial issues. It is not a major work. *The Answer to a Poisoned Book* is a valuable addition to More's *Complete Works*.

THE TIMES



England's literati

Chaucer, Milton and Wordsworth are part of an English literary heritage, which, from its stirrings in Anglo-Saxon poetry to the present day, is recorded in *The Oxford Illustrated History of English Literature*. Peter Ackroyd reviews it in *The Times* Books Page next week



... and regularly in *The Times*, Philip Howard (left), on words, Bernard Levin on the way we live now, Irving Wardle at the theatre, John Clare on education, Jane MacQuilty on wine, Geoffrey Smith on politics, Peter Ackroyd on books, Barbara Amiel's viewpoint, Paul Griffiths on music, Clifford Longley on the Church, the humour of Mel Calman and Barry Fantoni, John Higgins at the opera, Jonathan Meades on eating out, David Robinson on the cinema, David Sinclair on rock . . . and much more

THE TIMES

The world's most famous newspaper. (25p)

Advice to the great

Richard Tuck

GREGORY S. KAVKA
Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory
 460pp. Guildford: Princeton University Press.
 £30.10 (£8.65, paperback).
 0691077185

TOM SORELL
Hobbes
 163pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul. £14.95.
 0710098456

DAVID JOHNSTON
The Rhetoric of Leviathan: Thomas Hobbes and the politics of cultural transformation
 234pp. Guildford: Princeton University Press.
 £16.
 0691077177

The world which Hobbes inhabited was not our world, and it is often hard for us even to imagine what it was like and what its central concerns must have been. For example, he spent virtually all his adult life as what he termed a "domestic" in the households of great noblemen. He taught their children, ran errands for them (such as buying horses or borrowing money), translated their foreign correspondence and gave them practical advice about politics and ethics, just as his predecessors in such households since the Early Renaissance had done. His skills were those of a humanist, namely, a deep knowledge of classical literature, a fluency and elegance in ancient and modern languages, and a sensitivity to the complexity of the moral and political life. His masters' politics were on the whole royalist, their activities those of military-minded aristocrats, and their intellectual concerns were the appropriate ones for people in their position; thus it was (apparently) largely because his sometime master the Earl of Newcastle, and the Earl's younger brother, were interested in the new sciences of ballistics and optics (both of which had obvious military applications) that Hobbes was first set to work studying them. Revealingly, the first reference to Galileo in Hobbes's works is in a letter to the Earl reporting his failure to accomplish the task imposed by his patron of buying a copy of Galileo's *Dialogues*.

This truth about the world Hobbes inhabited is as obvious and unremarkable as the fact that Plato lived in and wrote about an ancient Greek city-state, and by itself it tells us no more about Hobbes's philosophy than that fact does about Plato's. Many surprising things are possible in an aristocratic culture: for example, it is easier to be disengaged from conventional family ties, and to downgrade their significance, if one lives as a servant in a great house. But a wholesale disregard of these truths would render large portions of major philosophical works unintelligible, and no one has ever had the nerve to carry through such a totally ahistorical programme. What some people do have the nerve to do, or have been encouraged to do, is to behave as if such truths should exact only a passing or preliminary deference, and that the world about which Hobbes or Plato was writing and the issues they were confronting were our issues in a straightforward sense. These three books about Hobbes display a fine array of attitudes on this issue: one is breathtakingly reconstructive, one is more sensitive but is often obliged to talk in pretty anachronistic terms, and the third seeks to put Hobbes in a more alien and genuinely Renaissance context.

Gregory Kavka's title is carefully chosen: his is an account of a Hobbesian theory, not of Hobbes's. As he says, he wishes to "explicate and defend a plausible system of moral and political hypotheses suggested and inspired by Hobbes". The obvious area of modern political philosophy into which to plug Hobbes is the extensive and important one defined by theories of rational individual co-operation and non-co-operation, and this is what Kavka (following a pattern set first by David Gauthier) seeks to do. The "prisoners' dilemma" and the "free-rider" problem then become the analytical tools, at least in part, for an explication of Hobbes's ideas.

What Kavka discerns in Hobbes, or standing rather vaguely behind Hobbes, is the following set of ideas. Men are rational maximizers who, in conditions of insecurity, will predominantly maximize their own self-interest (though they

do not have to be unconditional egoists). Such individuals generate a prisoners' dilemma about the provision of public goods, and the solution to this dilemma has to be elimination of their insecurity through the construction of a State. It is this aspect of his theory upon which Kavka places some weight, for he (rightly) takes the modern "social contract" theories such as Rawls's to be radically uninterested in the special moral function of a State. Insecurity can be eliminated because men ought to be what Kavka terms "rule-egoists"; that is to say, they ought to govern their conduct by rules. The rules should be chosen on the basis of their success in promoting the agent's long-term utility. In conditions of security, other people's interests can begin to play a part in each individual's decisions. With these premisses, Kavka then argues that (for example) the unified and potentially illiberal Hobbesian sovereign is unnecessary, and that what is in effect the Constitution of the United States conforms to a Hobbesian theory.

There are two quite separate things to be said about this account, depending on whether it is treated as a free-standing contemporary political theory or as a description of what Hobbes believed. On the former view, it is clear that most of the work in the theory is done by Kavka's notion of rule-egoism, according to which we have reasons for sticking to generally beneficial rules of conduct even in instances where our immediate utility would be maximized by breaking them, and where our long-term utility is not substantially weakened. It is only because we have these reasons, according to Kavka, that the insecurity of the state of nature can be circumvented. But as Kavka acknowledges, this is a notoriously difficult argument to advance: both in the analogous utilitarian tradition, and in the individualistic decision-theoretic tradition, it has usually been held that rational men would not abide by rules in such cases, and it has also usually been held that many crucial types of social co-operation would consequently be undermined.

Kavka's answer is broadly that it may be psychologically healthy for us to get into the habit of following rules; but the grounds which he gives us for supposing this to be so are that there are social benefits in caring about moral rules and internalizing moral norms. But these social benefits arise only as a result of a general process of education and psychological self-manipulation, and are therefore simply another instance of a generally beneficial rule—viz, something on the lines of "it is generally in our interests to get ourselves and others to care about general rules of this kind". But why should we always apply *this* rule to our conduct? Kavka has given us no new or persuasive answer to the old problem of this style of argument.

Seen as an account of what Hobbes actually thought, his interpretation is false in an important respect (one shared by many writers on Hobbes). There is virtually no evidence in any Hobbesian text that he believed, in a modern way, that individuals maximize their utilities and make rational choices about their preferences, and absolutely no evidence that he believed that even in a state of nature would they have the right to do so. All he ever says is that men have the right to protect themselves by whatever means they judge necessary, and in *De Cive* he gives two clear examples of conduct which would count as unjustifiable because, even if not positively harmful, they could not be shown to be instrumental to our survival—drunkenness and revenge. Thus we only have a reason for defecting from a co-operative enterprise, according to Hobbes, if we believe that we will be more secure by doing so, not merely that we will be better off in a wider sense (eg, possess more goods). It is very hard to reconstruct an argument based on these premisses as a prisoners' dilemma, and it is an important historical point that the prisoners' dilemma type of argument is a modern one: it is hard to find any clear case of it being employed much before the middle of the nineteenth century (for example, Hume strikingly did not employ it, and regarded defection from a generally beneficial enterprise as an instance of the failure of rationality).

Tom Sorell's book is much more sensitive on this matter, and indeed on all matters. Unlike Kavka, Sorell takes the whole of Hobbes's philosophy to be important, and much of the intellectual energy of the book is devoted to Hobbes's general philosophy of science. Sorell correctly casts doubt on the widely held belief that Hobbes was wedded to something called the "resolutive-compositional method", pointing out that his primary concern was with rights and duties, not with functions, and that the resolutive-compositional method makes little sense in moral matters. As he observes, the crude view of Hobbes's "scientific" methodology would blur the distinction between natural science, which is inherently hypothetical, and geometry or politics, which can be demonstrated since the terms involved in these latter kinds of discourse are human constructions.

Nevertheless, it is an oddly rootless enterprise which Sorell presents us with. If there is one thing which is clear about Hobbes, it is that he saw himself as an aggressive and embattled materialist, contesting all philosophies that required incorporeal substances or in which God had to play some crucial role. Sorell in a way takes this stance for granted, partly no doubt because the task imposed upon him is to expound Hobbes to an audience of modern philosophically-minded readers who are untroubled materialists; and yet the proof that there is matter and only matter in the universe occupied much of Hobbes's general philosophical energy.

A key example of this is his response to Descartes's hyperbolic doubt: Descartes, and modern scepticism in general, do not play a prominent part in Sorell's account, and yet much of Hobbes's philosophy (both natural and civil) makes sense principally as a response in various ways to them. Again, there is nothing remarkable about this: both the humanist culture he inhabited, and the modern French philosophy which he read and indeed contributed to, saw scepticism as the critical challenge to any properly founded philosophy. Cutting Hobbes off from his historical roots in this instance skews our understanding of him and lessens his interest for us.

On the other hand, Sorell's straightforward exposition of what Hobbes actually said, both in metaphysics and politics, is a great improvement on almost everything currently available. Unlike Kavka, Sorell is (for example) clear-headed about the limitations on what men can do in a state of nature, and sensitive to the kind of political argument Hobbes put forward, and in particular to its more liberal aspects. If Sorell's book does not in the end convey the excitement with which Hobbes wrote, and which he inspired in his contemporary readers, it does not mislead — and that is a very rare thing among books on Hobbes.

David Johnston's *The Rhetoric of Leviathan* seems to have found a much more fruitful and illuminating area of enquiry than the others. Johnston has noticed the pervasive concern with rhetoric in Hobbes's writings — a concern, of course, entirely to be expected in a Renaissance-style adviser to great noblemen and politicians. He has also noticed that in *Leviathan*, what men think is crucial: the manipulation of opinion and doctrine by the sovereign, and the attack on rival means of influencing opinion (such as rhetoric), are central issues. An exploration of Hobbes's discussion of these matters, particularly in the often-neglected Parts III and IV of *Leviathan*, provides the most original and interesting parts of Johnston's book.

His principal fault is that it does not go far enough. Johnston remains wedded to a relatively simple and conventional interpretation of what Hobbes took rational conduct in a state of nature and beyond to consist in, and he regards Hobbes's remarks about the manipulation of opinion as a sideshow.

Barry Gower has edited a collection of essays, *Logical Positivism in Perspective: Essays on Language, Truth and Logic* (129pp. Croom Helm. £20. 0 7099 3866 7), to which he also contributes an introduction. "The Criterion of Significance," Sir Alfred Ayer himself gives us his "Reflections on *Language, Truth and Logic*", while Barry Smith writes on "Austrian Origins of Logical Positivism", Mary Hesse on "Ayer and the Philosophy of Science", A. J. M. Milne on "Values and Ethics: The emotive theory", and Anthony O'Hear on "Ayer and Logic and Mathematics". The essays are based on lectures given at the University of Durham in 1986 to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the publication of Ayer's seminal work.

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tion of opinion as in various ways running counter to his remarks about rationality — so much so, that in the end Johnston reads *Leviathan* as a palimpsest, in which an exposition of rational conduct is increasingly overlaid and obliterated by an analysis of how to bring people to align their actions with the principles of reason. This view also obliges him to carve a wider gap between Hobbes's early work on political thought, *The Elements of Law*, and *Leviathan*, than has usually been thought necessary. But there is a way of reading *Leviathan* which sees the manipulation (including self-manipulation) of belief as at the heart of the account of rationality itself, and one advantage of this appeal is that it too links Hobbes firmly up to the post-sceptical concerns of his great contemporaries. Johnston has given us half of a new view of Hobbes, and we must be grateful for that; but the old view is still there, just over his shoulder.

These last two books suggest that the interpretation round Hobbes is beginning to burst asunder — though just at a moment when Kavka would draw it even tighter. It is an irony that the man who was seen by contemporaries as one of the two most dangerous and exciting philosophers of the seventeenth century, had the most dangerous and exciting age of modern philosophy, should for many years have had his views expounded in dull and unconvincing books. None of these three books is dull, and only one is unconvincing; perhaps Hobbes is about to receive his due.

This is His Coat

A plain officer's coat
 of Prussian blue
 with red collar and cuffs

(which allowed any subaltern
 to claim he wore
der Königs Rock),

the whole of the front
 is powdered and smeared
 with Spanish snuff.

The pockets are lined
 with chamois leather
 so as not to scratch

any of his collection
 of fifteen hundred
 jewelled snuff-boxes.

Unusually,
 he wore his sword-sash
 outside the coat

hoping the sash and sword
 would mask his odd shape —
 the wide hips and hollow back.

He felt the cold
 and buttoned the lapels
 across his chest

which also helped to secure
 the dog he often rode with
 snug under his chin.

(Greyhounds were his favourite
 and he built graves for them
 on the terrace at Sans Souci.)

His love of dogs
 was shared by a later leader:
 Hitler, saying that only Eva Braun

and Blondi were faithful to him,
 would quote Frederick's remark:
 "Now I know men; I prefer dogs."

OLIVER REYNOLDS

The language of light

Neil Phillip

WILLIAM MAYNE
Gideon Aho!
 150pp. Viking Kestrel. £6.95.
 0670811653

Gideon Aho! shows William Mayne back on form after a series of quirky and disappointing books. In its assured depiction of the unstated intimacies of family life it recalls the strengths of *Ravenhill* (1970) and *The Incline* (1972). Like them, it is demanding and not every reader will have the patience to enjoy it. It is an oblique book, in which things are apprehended by the shadow they cast on their surroundings rather than by direct examination. As in all his best work, Mayne refuses to choose one story from the many potential narratives.

This is not to say the book has no narrative drive. The sense of impending crisis is strong. But the story springs from the characters; they don't serve the story. Although the *Gideon* of the title is a deaf, brain-damaged teenager, *Gideon Aho!* is about as far from the manufactured "problem" novel as it could be.

It is, for a start, full of the pure wit which has always been Mayne's richest quality. It delights in the possibilities of language. Its syntax and phrasing have, in Mayne's phrase for Grand-py's building work, "A right and inevitable exactness". It is astonishing that Mayne can be so craftily precise and yet remain, as he does, entirely lucid and straightforward.

Language is one of his themes: the way language allows us to look round blind corners. For example, *Gideon* cannot speak: ("Gideon

using his middle word, 'Baoooh', somewhere between 'Rauh' and 'Dihth'.") But in one way he can speak more clearly than anyone, for his sounds, his actions and his emotions are inseparably meshed. Even with his limitations, he can make his inner life available to his family and, through Mayne's careful prose, to the reader.

Gideon waking up and staring at the fire, not hearing noises near him; sitting up and looking round when Dad came into the room; saying "Hyagh", beginning to say he was hungry and changing the word to a greeting, pleased to see Dad, shaking his arms and making him sit down against the fire.

The reader is made to feel the weight of *Gideon's* disability because his fifteen-year-old slowness is set off by the mercurial make-believe life of his young brother and sister, whose existence is a kaleidoscope of willed self-deceptions. Between these two poles is twelve-year-old Eva, whose viewpoint overlaps significantly with that of the book's observing eye. These children, in their home on the barge, together with Mum, Dad and Grandpa, make up that rare thing in children's literature, a family which is a living entity rather than a background for plot development.

William Mayne is one of the best guides we have to the perplexities and intensities of feeling in childhood. In *Gideon Aho!* he shows those perplexities and intensities at work in a character who is unable to express them with anything other than varied inflections of "Baoooh", "Rauh" and "Dihth". *Gideon* is not a static character: he develops in response to circumstances; in his own way, he grows up. The story of how he does so is moving, engrossing, and real.

Family fortunes

Anne Duchêne

ELISE McCUTCHEON
Storm Bird
 176pp. Dent. £7.95.
 04000239 X

The dust-jacket refers to *Storm Bird* as Elsie McCutcheon's fourth "novel", not mentioning the children, presumably because the book acknowledges in passing such adult disagreements as poverty, bankruptcy, cruelty, unrequited love, and peculiar behaviour in public on the part of one's next of kin (even if, here, only adopted kin). Really, though, it is a lively, somewhat over-plotted story for girls (chiefly aged about ten or — like its heroine, Jenny — twelve).

It is set in the first years of this century in a fishing village in Suffolk, where McCutcheon is at home. This allows her to deploy a good deal of information about the fisherman's year, and affection for the brave simplicities and Chapel favours of such a community at that time. She also, among the lower orders, faithfully suggests the speech-rhythms of the East Anglian dialect; these go cold in print always, alas, and readers who can supply their warmth and their copious glottal-stopping — mercifully, not attempted here — are at an advantage. Words like "mawther" explain themselves. Anachronisms, like "blowing his top", are rare.

Chapter One, slightly misleadingly, is about Jack, eleven-year-old son of the big house in the village, "leading the one-designs home" in a village regatta until he observes a blue roller in the sky which, as he is determined to be an ornithologist, causes him disastrously to release the roller — a touch of Arthur Ransome against which older readers may brace themselves, but which only recurs sporadically thereafter.

In Chapter Two, Jenny is snatched from a suburban London girls' school; when her father's newsgasmic business fails, to live in a village with Aunt Clara, her father's adopted sister. Family relationships are rather complex: several significant members are dead, including Jenny's mother ("Jenny had been snatched when her father's mother died. Her mother had been an orphan, brought up in a home. It had had no maternal grandparents").

Jenny's father goes off to repair the family

fortunes as first mate in a drifter (this young David-Copperfield element allows for usefully protracted absences, and delays by shipwreck), and Jenny is sent as tiro chambermaid, at four shillings a week, to the big house, which allows glimpses of below-stairs life. Her talents once recognized, she shares lessons with Josh, who has been released from hated prep school for a year for health reasons. Josh, a very well-brought-up little boy, has a secret, out on the marshes, which he soon shares with Jenny. Aunt Clara has a much more unwieldy secret, which causes her frequently to behave very distressingly, and Jenny has to learn about the persistence of the past in the present before all is unravelled to a happy end, even, in a modified way, for unfortunate Aunt Clara.

One has to admire the energy and despatch of the author's plotting, even while wishing there was a little less of it. Next time, she might concentrate on a smaller unit, like the Blocks, say, Aunt Clara's cheerful if too numerous neighbours, whose father agitates Jenny by apparently setting fire to the outside lavatory ("You great old stoopid dicky, you! That's not a lavvy! That's the fish-house where Dad smoke his herrin'!"). Paster and less conscientious readers will simply take the comic and the poignant on the wing, and let the more elaborate details drop.

Recent titles in the Bodley Head's Bodley Bookshelf series of paperback reissues of children's fiction include: *The Day the Calling Fell Down* (196p. 0 370 30799 2) and *The Night the Rain Came In* (182pp. 0 370 30798 4). Jennifer Wayne's two comic novels of the adventures of the Brown family which were first published in 1961 and 1963: *The Witch's Brat* by Rosemary Sutcliffe (first published in 1970. 140pp. 0 370 31002 0); *Singing Stones* by Winifred Finlay (first published in 1970. 182pp. 0 370 30761 5); *Return to the Gate*, William Corlett's novel set in the future (first published in 1975. 168pp. 0 370 31012 8); and *The Breaking of Arnold* by Stanley Watts (first published in 1971. 112pp. 0 370 30800 X). These titles are all priced at £4.50.

Forthcoming titles will include: *I Capture the Castle* by Dodie Smith, the author of *One Hundred and One Dalmatians* (first published in 1949. 350pp. 0 370 30782 8); *The Greatest Gresham* by Gillian Avery (first published in 1962. 252pp. 0 370 310 624); and *No-Bait of Drum* by Hester Burton (first published in 1966. 196pp. 0 370 30781 X). These titles will also be priced £4.50.



A detail from one of Liz Underhill's illustrations to *This is the House that Jack Built*, which has recently been published by Methuen (unnumbered pages. £5.95. 0 416 96010 3).

Intergalactic interludes

John Clute

ANTHONY HOROWITZ
The Silver Citadel
 150pp. Methuen. £7.95.
 041697001

Because it comes somewhere in the middle of a series of tales about a great war between the forces of good and ultimate evil, very little happens in *The Silver Citadel* that has not happened for the first time elsewhere, and all the climaxes in the book are of necessity false. The victory here of a clutch of paranormal children in New York is only a prelude to a coming final battle, which seems due to take place somewhere in the next volume (or two) in Peru; and the defeat of Evelyn Carniti — whose polished black hair, as well as her name when pronounced aloud, more than adequately point to her true nature — is clearly little more than a setback for those of her ilk.

Much to their advantage, one protagonist dominates the first two volumes of the "Power of Five" series, *The Devil's Door-Bell* and *The Night of the Scorpion*. First in Yorkshire, then in Peru, young Martin comes into conflict with the Old Ones, an evil horde cast out of our universe epochs ago through the agency of five children joined together in a telepathic concordat. As the twentieth-century reincarnation

of the leader of these children, Martin is the natural opponent of the Old Ones' attempt to re-occupy our sphere.

Nothing in this basic story need alarm, nor much startle, readers old enough to grapple with J. R. R. Tolkien, or for that matter any of the classic Marvel Comics from 1963 to 1969. But in *The Silver Citadel* a slightly desperate *medias-res* feverishness seems to have beset Anthony Horowitz. Instead of one paranormal protagonist, there are now two telepathic twins. And as soon as Worm and Mr Bane (two of a host of minions of the Old Ones) capture one twin in Manhattan, the other sets off with a comical female writer, an FBI agent, the FBI agent's boss, several extras, and Martin himself, to save both his brother and civilization too. The Old Ones plan to subvert America by stuffing Bibles with stashes of heroin. No child (they aver) will be able to resist the bait. But the stolen twin is saved, along with hundreds of kidnapped paranormal children; tons of heroin are confiscated; Ms Carniti topples off her eponymous skyscraper with a shriek. There is a good deal of rather sneering violence, much noise, some cartoon sillinesses, and no resolution. At the story's end the brave paranormal lads (girls need not apply) take off for Lima, where the real battle is yet to be fought. They have clearly already begun to forget this interlude. Readers of *The Silver Citadel* are likely to follow suit.

Had we but known

Pat Raine

CATHERINE SEFTON
Shadows on the Lake
 125pp. Hamish Hamilton. £6.95.
 0241119979

Annie Orr is a Northern Irish thirteen-year-old who lives with her father and brothers on the edge of a lake, in a house at the bottom of a track known as Cow Lane. Annie's mother has recently died, and the bereaved girl is at her wits' end to keep the rest of the family from suffering further upheaval, trying to keep her father in reasonable spirits, her younger brother looking more or less presentable and her elder brother out of trouble with the police.

In trying to stick up for her family, Annie gets hold of the wrong end of one or two sticks, as well as ending in a spot. She and her younger brother, Peter (sometimes called "Squirt"), suspect their brother Baxter of having put himself at odds with the law, and various incidents — such as the discovery by Annie of a sackful of what she takes to be stolen property — contribute to this impression. Annie

herself is illegally — but not discredibly — employed as assistant cook and waitress in a local restaurant run by a couple of Hungarian ex-refugees. The family income — not very secure — is thereby boosted.

Annie is a robust girl who takes a poor view of capitalists, exploiters, would-be step-mothers, flouncing flirts, bad company of any sort for her brother Baxter: people, however, who fall into these categories may well not be as black as she (the narrator) paints them. She is, after all, an adolescent disturbed by her mother's untimely death, and resentful of the fact that this impending event was kept from her for as long as possible.

Annie's state of mind is crucial to the plot, and so is the failure of everyone in the know in other areas to say what is going on. This is one of those books in which a lot of trouble could have been avoided if various questions had been asked and answered at suitable moments — a "had-I-but-known" adventure transferred from detective to children's fiction. Annie is a girl of good heart, and brave and resourceful to boot. This story by "Catherine Sefton" (the pen-name of Martin Waddell) makes agreeable, undemanding reading.

Johanna 1986

TLS Listings

A comprehensive weekly selection
of new and forthcoming books received by the TLS

The TLS Listings provides full publication details of those books received each week by the TLS which seem to fall within the main interests of our readers. Children's books, foreign-language books and paperback reprints of recent works are not, however, included. Publishers are asked to ensure that they let us have all the necessary information, including price and publication date.

Anthropology

Burke, Peter *The Historical Anthropology of Early Modern Italy: Essays on perception and communication* Cambridge UP, 281pp., £25/\$34.50, 0 521 32041 0, 16/4/87.

Architecture

Benedict, Maurice Le Corbusier: To live with the light *Architectural Press/Geneva: Skira*, 229pp., illus. £19.50 (paperback), 0 85139 804 9, 24/3/87.
Clark, W. W. *Laon Cathedral: Architecture (2) (Courtauld Institute Illustration Archives, Companion Text 2)* Harvey Miller, 20 Marryat Road, London SW19 5BD, 80pp., illus. £20 (paperback), 0 905203 56 9, 3/87.
de Wit, Wim, editor Louis Sullivan: The function of ornament *Norton/Chicago Historical Society/St. Louis Art Museum*, 224pp., illus. £27/\$42, 0 393 02358 3, 25/4/87.
Selmi, Andrew Towards a Social Architecture: The role of school-building in post-war England *Yale UP*, 267pp., illus. £19.95/\$35, 0 300 03830 5, 7/5/87.
Sica, Claudia Maria, illustrated by Tina Rawle *Committed to Classicism: The building of Downing College, Cambridge* Downing College, Cambridge University, 226pp., illus. 0 9511620 4 4.

Art, including photography

Bennett, Stuart How To Buy Photographs (Christie's Collectors Guides) *Oxford: Phaidon/Christie's*, 159pp., illus. £17.95, 0 7148 8036 1, 9/4/87.
Dei Chiaro, Maria A., editor Corinthea: Studies in honour of Darrell A. Amyx *Columbia: Missouri UP*, 182pp., illus. £25.25, 0 8252 0017 4, 4/87.
Digby, John and Joan *The Collage Handbook* Thames and Hudson, 240pp., illus. £12.95 (paperback), 0 500 27436 3, 21/4/87.
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Radford, Robert Art for a Purpose: The Artists' International Association, 1933-1953 (Winchester Studies in Art and Criticism) *Winchester School of Art Press, School of Art, Park Avenue, Winchester SO23 8DL*, 205pp., illus. £6.50 (paperback), 0 95046783 7, 6/3/87.
Taylor, Brandon Modernism, Post-Modernism, Realism: A critical perspective for art (Winchester Studies in Art and Criticism) *Winchester School of Art Press, 173pp., illus. £6.50 (paperback), 0 95046783 8, 6/3/87.*
Ullmann, Anne, editor The Wood Engravings of Turkish Ravellings *Prater*, 45pp., illus. £17.50 (paperback), 0 86092 099 2, 13/4/87.

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Burnett, John, David Vincent and David Mayall The Autobiography of the Working Class: An annotated critical bibliography, vol. 2: 1900-1945 *Brighton: Harvester*, 435pp., £80, 0 7108 0970 0, 19/3/87.
Carter, Sebastian Twentieth Century Type Designers (Design Library) *Treffell*, 168pp., illus. £14.95, 0 86294 076 1, 16/4/87.
Day, Frank Arthur Kossler: A guide to research (Reference Library of the Humanities, 612) *New York: Garland*, 248pp., 0 8240 8470 8.
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Gilbert, Bentley Brinkerhoff David Lloyd George: A political life, vol. 1: The Architect of Change, 1863-1912 *Bedford*, 346pp., £25, 0 7134 5558 6, 30/4/87.
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Marrin, Bernard Poor Bloody Infantry: A subaltern on the Western Front 1916-1917 *Murray*, 174pp., illus. £11.95, 0 19185 4374 6, 16/4/87.
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Sabot, Rudolph The Real Wagner *Deutsch*, 312pp., illus. £17.95, 0 233 97870 4, 23/4/87.
Samuels, Ernest Bernard Berenson: The making of a legend *Harvard UP*, 680pp., illus. £19.95, 0 674 06779 7, 29/3/87.
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Walker, John O. A Circle of Friends: The Tennysons and the Lushingtons of Park House *Columbus: Ohio State UP*, 290pp., £29.50, 0 8142 0424 4, 15/3/87.
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Wetherill, Benjamin Alfred, edited by Maurice S. Fletcher *The Wetherills of the Mesa Verde: Autobiography of Benjamin Alfred Wetherill* (1st pub. in US 1977) *Lincoln: Nebraska UP*, 333pp., £9.45/\$9.95 (paperback), 0 8032 9719 X, 30/4/87.

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Winnans, R. *Poster Trading Secrets: Seduction and scandal at "The Wall Street Journal"* *Macmillan*, 260pp., £12.95, 0 333 44305 8, 23/4/87.

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Banks, Barry, and Jan Tumlir *Economic Policy and the Adjustment Problem* (Thames Essays series) *Aldershot: Gower*, 101pp., £8.95 (paperback), 0 566 65332 2, 9/4/87.
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Budyris, Algie Rogue Moon (Classic SF, 11; 1st pub. 1968) *Gollancz*, 173pp., £2.95 (paperback), 0 575 03979 5, 23/4/87.
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Greenleaf, Stephen Beyond Blame *Bodley Head*, 290pp., £10.95, 0 370 31054 3, 30/4/87.
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Hubbard, L. Ron An Alien Affair (Mission Earth, vol. 4; 1st pub. in US 1986) *New York: Doubleday*, 204pp., £10.95, 0 370 31054 3, 30/4/87.
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